



## **Town of Spencer: Spencer Town Center PDA (#280-3)**

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### ***Purpose of Analysis***

The Spencer Town Center was identified as a Priority Development Area in the Central Thirteen Prioritization Project completed in 2013. The Spencer Town Center (ID # 280-3) was identified both as a local and regionally significant Priority Development Area (PDA). In 2014, Spencer Town Center was identified by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts as a State-identified PDA. Map 1 on page 2 shows the location of the Spencer Town Center PDA.

Priority Development Areas (PDAs) are areas within a municipality that have been identified as capable of supporting additional development or as candidates for redevelopment. These are areas on which a town is focusing its energy to promote thoughtful economic development that is closely tied to the community's goals.

PDA assistance projects are intended as a "next step" following the completion of a prioritization project. Planning funds from the District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) Program support the effort and up to 25 hours of technical assistance may be provided to each interested community. Specifically, the objective of this project is to provide participating communities with a packet of information for a PDA that can be used to guide them in identifying possible zoning changes, development of a Chapter 43D application<sup>1</sup> or other grant applications (MassWorks; DHCD's Downtown Technical Assistance), promotion to developers, as a template for future analysis of additional PDAs, etc. CMRPC staff worked with each participating community to ensure that the technical assistance provided was tailored to the town's specific needs.

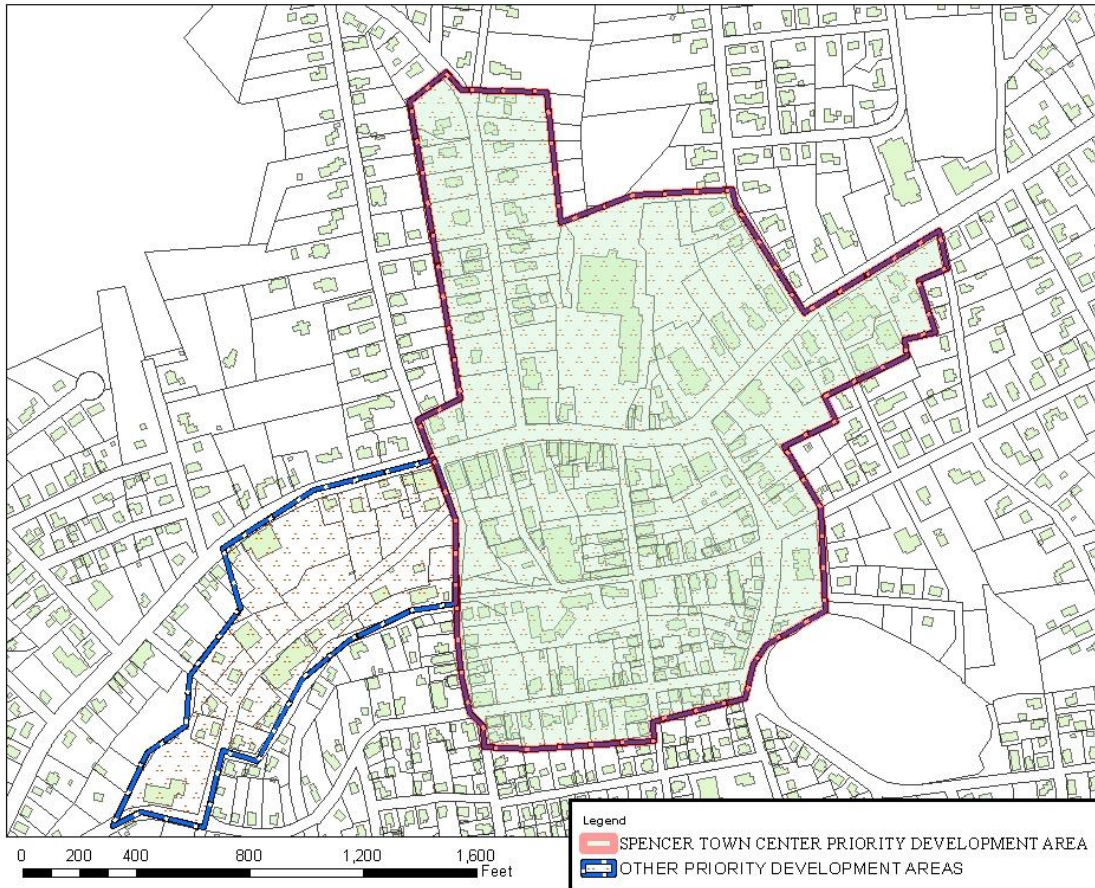
### ***Study Area Selection***

The Town of Spencer's DLTA request for the Spencer Town Center PDA analysis was submitted by the Town of Spencer on the behalf of Michelle R. Buck, the Spencer Town Planner. The Town of Spencer PDA Project for 2014 was designed to "Provide a more targeted analysis of the Sugden Block Building in particular and the closely-related issue of parking availability in Spencer Center." Based on a meeting that CMRPC's Principal Planner, Eric R. Smith, AICP, attended on April 17th at Spencer Town Hall with the Spencer Town Planner and the Town Administrator, Adam Gaudette, a Project Scope was developed that directed CMRPC Staff to focus the DLTA technical assistance time on a review of available parking in the Spencer Town Center (including within the vicinity of the Sugden Block Building), provide an assessment of opportunities for additional shared and common parking areas (including Town-owned properties), and provide recommendations and next steps related to wayfinding, parking and the gateway into Spencer Town Center.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.mass.gov/hed/business/licensing/43d](http://www.mass.gov/hed/business/licensing/43d)

**Map 1: Spencer Town Center PDA**  
**Spencer Town Center PDA**



**Infrastructure**

An important element related to planning for the Spencer Town Center is the ongoing Main Street reconstruction project. A good summary of the Main Street Reconstruction Project is provided in the “Sugden Building Sale – Main St. Reconstruction Notes” document prepared by Steven J. Tyler, P.E., Spencer Highway Department Superintendent and excerpts are provided below:

*“The Town of Spencer has plans to complete a major roadway reconstruction and downtown revitalization project on Main Street (Route 9/31), from Elm Street to Maple Street (could include map in document). It is anticipated that construction on this project will start in 2016. Additional Main Street project information is available on the Town’s website at:*

[http://www.spencerma.gov/Pages/SpencerMA\\_Highway/mainstreetproject](http://www.spencerma.gov/Pages/SpencerMA_Highway/mainstreetproject).

*“The Main Street project will reconstruct and revitalize downtown Spencer and will include roadway resurfacing; traffic and signal coordination improvements; bicycle accommodations; pedestrian sidewalk reconstruction inclusive of all necessary handicap accessibility upgrades, ramps and crosswalks; streetscape enhancements; and utility systems infrastructure (water and sewer) upgrades. The Total estimated construction cost for this project is \$3.6 million dollars.*

Another element to the Main Street Reconstruction Project is the Pleasant Street realignment, which was a recommendation in the 2009 Spencer Town Center Revitalization Planning Project Report (Herein after the “STCRPP Report.” This Report is also discussed in the “*Planning in the Study Area*” section) prepared by The Cecil Group, FXM Associates and BETA Group:

*“On the western side of the Sugden Block, Pleasant Street will be reconfigured / realigned and because of this reconfiguration...the existing pedestrian sidewalk will be relocated to the new Pleasant Street curb line.”*

The Town of Spencer held a 25% Design Public Hearing on December 9, 2014. The 25% Design Plans are now available on the Town’s Main Street Project website. Of note it is important to understand that the issue of streetscape elements are not part of the 25% Design and the Town will want to make sure these streetscape elements are part of the Final Design Plans as these will tie into walkability and the gateways elements of Main Street.

The Spencer Town Center is a location with water and sewer infrastructure, but in need of upgrade, which is part of the Main Street Reconstruction Project. Otherwise there is the capacity within the water and sewer systems to facilitate redevelopment/revitalization of the buildings within Spencer Town Center.

### **Land Use**

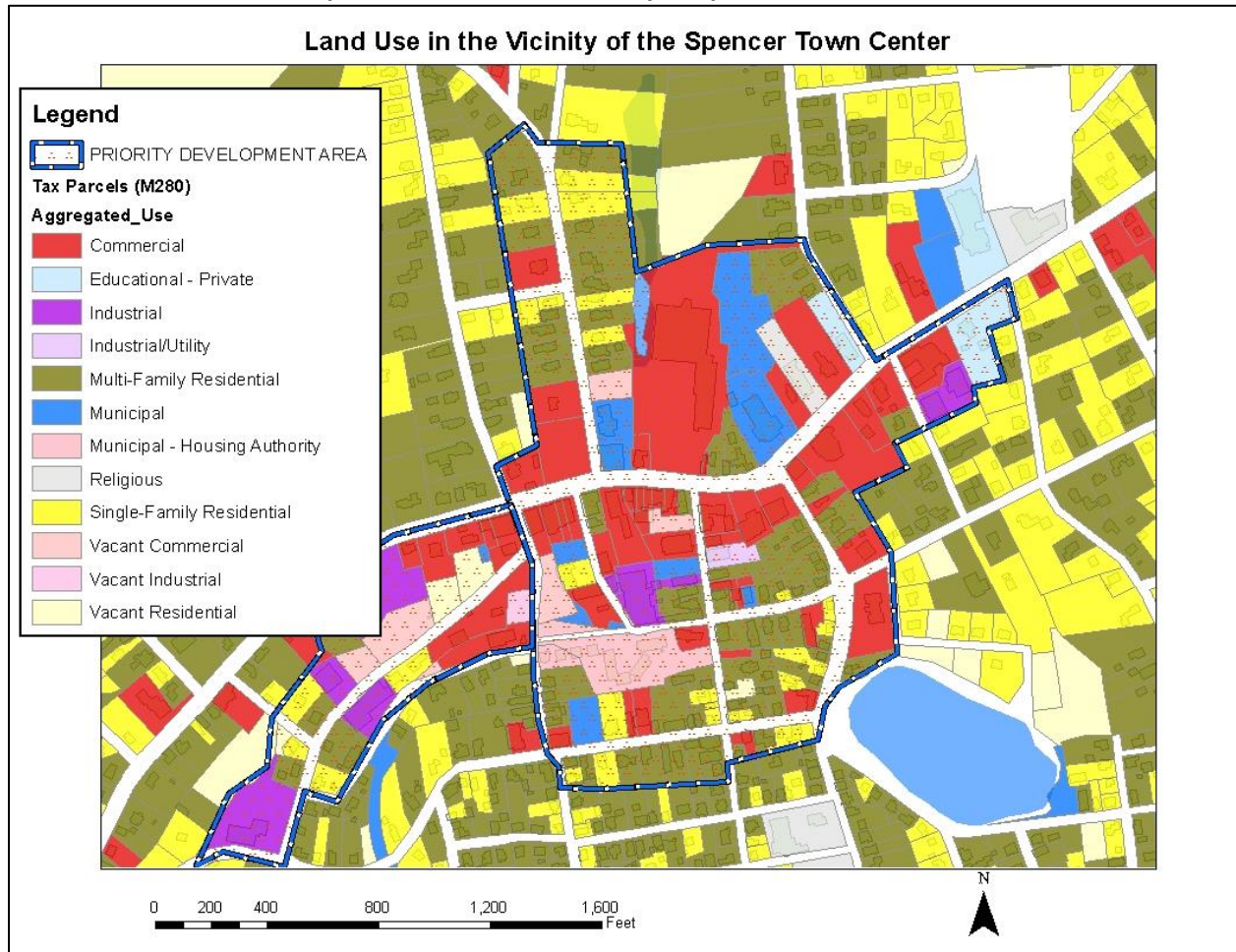
The Town Center has a diverse mix of land uses (see Map 2 on page 4, which is based on the Town of Spencer’s Assessors Land Use Codes). Generally, however, Route 9 (Main Street) has the greatest concentration of commercial land uses in the Town Center area with residential in the surrounding blocks. There are a number of buildings, such as 136 Main Street, that have had mixed uses with commercial on the first floor. Unfortunately, as has been documented in a number of previous planning efforts, a number of buildings are vacant in the upper stories; one reason is lack of elevator or other ADA accessibility.

### **Zoning**

The study area is in the Town’s Town Center Zoning District. Map 3 on page 5 shows the Zoning Districts in the vicinity of the Spencer Town Center. The boundary of this PDA matches the boundary of the Spencer Town Center Zoning District. Section 3.1.5 of the Town’s Zoning Bylaw defines the Town Center Zoning District:

*“3.1.5 TC – Town Center Mixed Use: This district encompasses downtown Spencer and includes a mixture of business, service, and residential uses. The district regulations are designed to encourage a vibrant area where people can shop, eat, conduct business, and live in a pedestrian friendly environment.”*

**Map 2: Land Use in the Vicinity of Spencer Town Center**



Article 5 within the Zoning Bylaw provides the set of Dimensional Regulations, which is provided for the Town Center Zoning District in Table 1 below:

**Table 1: Town of Spencer Town Center (TC) Zoning Dimensional Requirements**

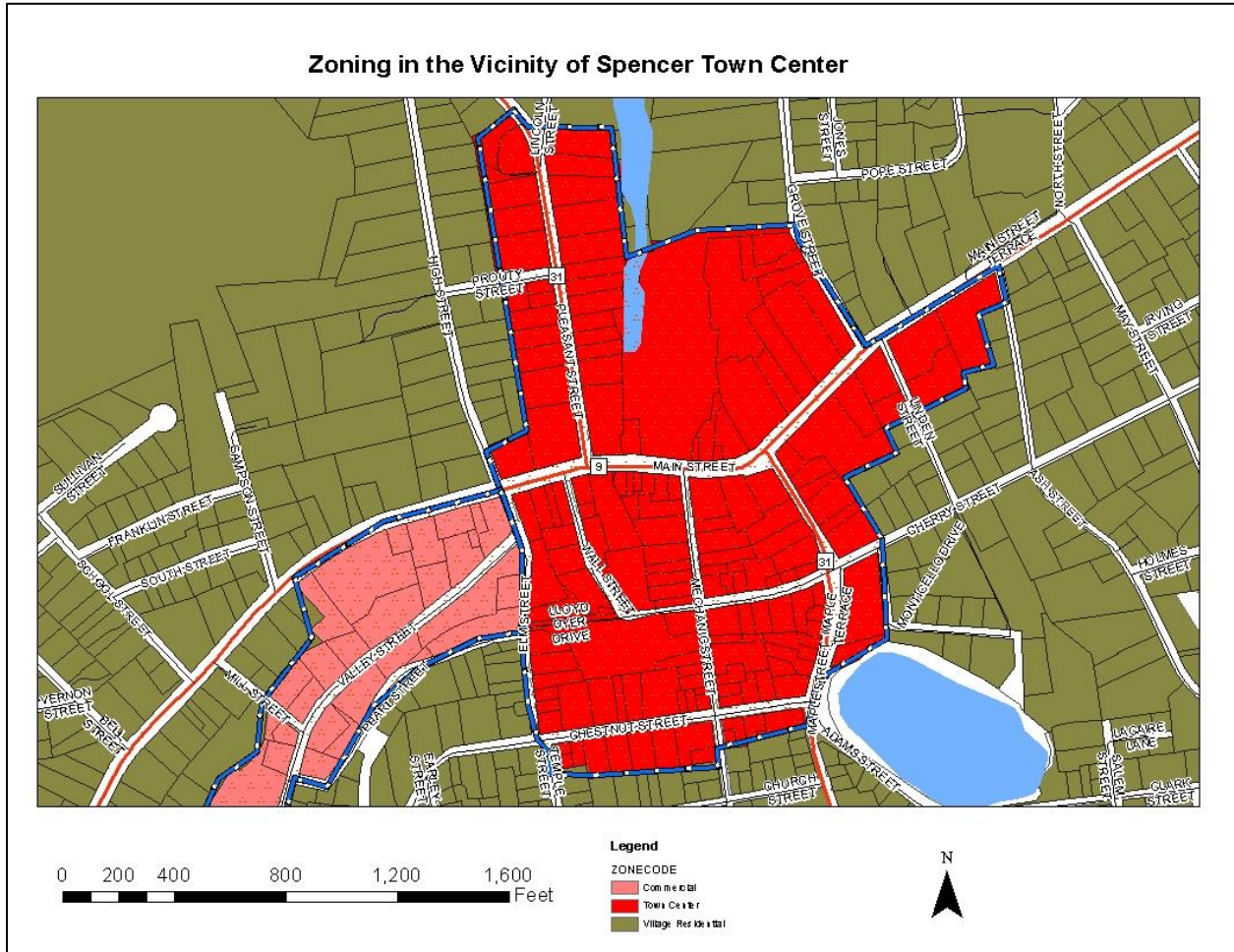
ZONING DISTRICT	MIN. LOT AREA (Sq. Ft.)	MIN. LOT FRONTAGE (Feet)	MIN. LOT WIDTH (Ft.)	MIN. FRONT YARD (Feet)	MIN. SIDE and REAR YARD (Feet)	MIN. BUFFER (Feet)	MAX. BLDG HT (Feet) <sup>2</sup> /STORIES
TC (Town Center)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	10	N/A	40 / 4

Given the existing built characteristics of the Spencer Town Center that features many buildings that have zero setback (built right to the sidewalk and also right to the side lot line), small lot size and frontage, the Town has crafted their Town Center Zoning requirements accordingly. As is assessed in other planning documents, the zoning requirements of Spencer Town Center are not an obstacle to redevelopment.

<sup>2</sup> No building over 35 feet in height shall be used for habitation.



**Map 3: Zoning in the Vicinity of Spencer Town Center**



Article 4 in the Zoning Bylaw provides the Table of Uses in Section 4.2 that governs the set of land uses that are either allowed by-right, by Special Permit, or are not allowed. To follow is an assessment of uses in the Spencer Town Center Zoning District: allowed either by-right (Y) or Special Permit (SP).

**Residential Use Assessment:** A broad allowance of most residential uses are provided: Single-Family Attached, Two-Family, Multi-Family, Conversion of an existing Single-Family Dwelling to a Two-Family, Mixed Uses in a Single Building are allowed by-right. Accessory Apartments are allowed subject to Special Permit (SP). Single-family detached dwellings are prohibited.

**Public and Civic Use Assessment:** Utility, Minor; Government facilities; Emergency Medical Ambulance Services are allowed by-right. The following are allowed subject to SP approval: Utility, Major; *Parking facilities* (emphasis added); Hospital, infirmary; Nursing or convalescent home; Family Daycare Home; Large Family Daycare Home; Private nonprofit community center building, adult education/adult day care center or other similar facility; Private nonprofit library or museum.

**Agricultural Use Assessment:** The only allowed agricultural uses are those exempt under Chapter 40A, "Farm at least 5 acres in size – agricultural, horticultural, silvicultural, aquacultural" which are allowed by-right." One agricultural-related use CMRPC has noted is not expressly permitted is "Farmers Markets" and recommends such a use be allowed by-right (perhaps with Site Plan Review) in the Town

Center. If the Town encouraged Farmers Markets in the Town Center it could provide a venue and act as a destination for folks in Town and surrounding communities to visit Spencer's Town Center.

Office and Laboratory Use Assessment: Business, financial or professional offices; Office or clinic for medical, psychiatric, or other health services for the examination or treatment of persons as outpatients; Trade, professional or other school conducted as a private business for gain; and, Radio or television studio are all allowed by-right. Laboratory or research facility and Radio or television transmission facility are allowed subject to Special Permit.

Retail Business and Consumer Business Assessment: The following uses are all currently allowed by-right: Eating establishment, high turnover; Eating establishment, low turnover; Eating establishment, drive in/drive thru (*this use is allowed by-right but CMRPC recommends the Town consider changing this restaurant category to be allowed by Special Permit; impact on drive in/drive thru uses on traffic, noise, etc. in the Town Center does warrant a Special Permit review process*); Small scale retail sales and service with no outside storage; Personal service business such as but not limited to barber shops, beauty shops, tanning salons, nail salons; and Bed & Breakfast, Inn.

Currently the following retail and business-related uses require a Special Permit: Small scale retail sales and service with outside storage; Large scale retail sales and service with no outside storage; Sales of flowers, garden supplies, or agricultural products partly or wholly outdoors, which are not associated with an agricultural use; Eating establishment, specializing in serving alcoholic beverages; Dry cleaning, shoe repair, tailoring, or other similar uses; Veterinary establishment or pet grooming establishment; Hotel, motel; Private membership club or lodge; Indoor entertainment and recreational facility, including but not limited to bowling alley, theatre, or sports arena research facility and Radio or television transmission facility.

Automotive Services Use Assessment: The only such use allowed is a "Automobile repair shop, autobody shop" allowed by SP. CMRPC Staff notes there is the Spencer Auto Body establishment already located in the Spencer Town Center, but generally CMRPC Staff does not believe auto related uses are the ideal to be allowed in a Town Center area.

Industrial, Wholesale and Transportation Use Assessment: Printing, binding, publishing and related arts and trades; and Manufacturing, assembling or packaging of goods are both allowed by SP.

Assessment of "Other Principal Uses": Wind Monitoring or Meteorological Tower and Small Scale Wind Energy Conversion Device are allowed by-right. Large Scale Wind Energy Conversion Device is allowed by SP. CMRPC Staff questions if the Spencer Town Center is an appropriate place for a large wind turbine. Larger facilities are better sited in less dense neighborhoods. CMRPC Staff recommends changing this to a prohibited use in the Town Center.

Section 4.3 of the Zoning Bylaw has a set of performance standards for various uses that require a Special Permit. The following uses have performance standards related to be permitted within the Town Center (TC) Zoning District:

- Section 4.3.12: Dry cleaning, shoe repair, tailoring, or other similar uses are permitted in the Town Center district provided the establishment has no more than five (5) employees on site at any time.

- Section 4.3.13: Veterinary establishments and pet grooming establishments are permitted provided all animals are housed indoors; in the TC district all animals shall be kept indoors at all times.
- Section 4.3.26: Space for manufacture, assembly or packaging of goods is permitted in the TC (and C) districts provided that:
  - A. At least 50% of said merchandise is sold at retail on the premises and that all display, sales and storage is conducted within a building;
  - B. That not more than 5 persons are employed at any one time for the manufacturing, assembly or packaging of such goods; and
  - C. All resulting cinders, dust, flashing, fumes, gases, odors, refuse matter, smoke and vapor be effectively confined to the premises or be disposed of in a manner that does not create a nuisance or hazard to safety or health.

Section 4.4 addresses “Accessory Uses” which “*are permitted...as accessory uses to the primary use of the property. In no case shall such uses exceed 40% of the property, determined by square footage of the structure in which it is located or square footage of the area of the parcel, whichever is the appropriate measure.*” One accessory use does have a provision specifically related to the Town Center: “*Parking of vehicles over one ton in capacity is permitted subject to the provisions in Section 4.8.4.*” The Town Center is one of the zoning districts where this use requires a Special Permit.

Article 6 is Design Standards, which addresses such measures as Off-Street Parking, Signage and Lighting. Section 6.1 provides the set of Off Street Parking & Loading Requirements. An Assessment of the parking and loading requirements is as follows:

- Section 6.1.1.H is the Town’s “Table of Parking Requirements” and does provide “for the Town Center (TC) zoning district, where the following shall be used as a guideline only, see Section 6.1.1 I., which states that “*The number of parking spaces for uses in the TC district shall be required to the extent that it is physically possible to provide said parking on the site. The permitting authority shall determine the number of spaces required, taking into consideration issues such as rehabilitation of existing structures and availability of off-site public or private parking, including on-street parking.*” CMRPC Staff believes this provision provides adequate flexibility related to required number of parking spaces required for uses in the CT District.
- 6.1.2 Parking Facility Design has sub-section A, Perimeter buffer, which for the TC is located in subsection 6.1.2.A.3 and provides the perimeter buffer In the TC district, which is “*5’ front and none required on the side and rear.*” CMRPC Staff noticed how for the other zoning districts there is a greater side and rear buffer required where abutting residential use. CMRPC Staff notes our support for the idea of having an increased buffer for business uses that abut residential uses and the Town may wish to provide at least some side and rear buffer between commercial and industrial-related uses in the TC District when abutting residential uses.
- 6.1.2(B) provides that each parking space size “shall be 9 feet in width and 18 feet in length exclusive of drives and maneuvering space and the total area of any parking facility for more than 5 cars shall average at least 300 square feet per car inclusive of driveways.” These are typical standards and no changes are recommended at this time.
- Other parking design standards provided under Section 5 include Section 6.1.2, which address handicapped parking spaces, loading space size, number of loading facilities and width of drive aisles; and Section 6.1.3 provides a set of requirements related to drive-up facilities.

- Section 6.1.4 includes a provision that allows the requirements of §6.1.1, 6.1.2 and 6.1.3 to be reduced subject to approval of a Special Permit.

CMRPC Staff noted that one mechanism for parking currently lacking in the Spencer Zoning Bylaw is a provision for shared parking. CMRPC Staff discussed this matter with the Spencer Town Planner, who confirmed that shared parking is not explicitly allowed in the Spencer Zoning Bylaw. The Town does have some informal shared parking arrangements, including parking at the Price Chopper Plaza that is allowed by non-customers. From a zoning standpoint, the Price Chopper property is grandfathered, although they have the informal shared parking arrangement as noted. In addition, the Town Administrator noted that the Town permits Price Chopper to take snow to a Town-owned site. Under this arrangement, full use of the lot can be maintained during the winter and snow storage is adequately dealt with. CMRPC has provided a number of shared parking zoning bylaw provisions in Appendix A of this Report.

Parking is also available on the Sovereign Bank property (74 spaces according to the 2009 STCRPP Report) as the Town does have a long-term lease in place for a \$1 and the Town maintains that lot. However, it is important to note that this parking area will be impacted by the relocation of Pleasant Street to meet Wall Street at the Main Street intersection. Per the current 25% Design Plans, it looks like about 25-30 parking spaces would be lost by the Pleasant Street realignment effort. Among the users of the Sovereign Bank lot are the Spencer Auto Body employees, who cross Main Street. Opportunities for additional parking are discussed in the “Development Suitability, Opportunities and Constraints” section below.

### ***Planning in the Study Area***

In recent years, The Town of Spencer has focused significant effort related to planning in the Spencer Town Center. CMRPC Staff wants to give kudos to the Town for all the planning it has done for the Town Center. As part of the Spencer Town Center PDA Assessment, CMRPC Staff reviewed the following planning documents. We have included relevant information from each document in this report, especially from the *2009 Spencer Town Center Revitalization Plan*.

One of the identified goals of the 2003 Spencer Master Plan was to “*Revitalize and Beautify Downtown Spencer.*” The Master Plan addressed the need for elderly and affordable housing as well identifying the need for zoning bylaw amendments that led to the rezoning to develop the Town Center Zoning District.

Information from the 2009 Spencer Town Center Revitalization Plan was incorporated in this report, especially related to identification of potential parking areas, streetscape improvements and development of enhanced gateways into the Town Center.

The December 2008 “*Planning Assistance For Affordable Housing*” study, prepared by William Scanlan, AICP, Joseph Alicata, AIA, and Graves Engineering, Inc. focused on development of affordable housing on three (3) parcels; two (2) of which are in the Town Center area: a) the former Cherry Street Firehouse and b) vacant Town-owned land at 46-48 Chestnut Street. CMRPC assessment of potential parking areas includes the 46-48 Chestnut Street parcel.

The “*Spencer Downtown Housing Study*” was completed in October 2013 and funded under the Massachusetts Downtown Initiative (MDI). This study was prepared by Finepoint Associates, LLC. This timely comprehensive study of housing conditions in the Town included some important findings that



included below:

- *Downtown Spencer has some of the ingredients that potential downtown residents typical (sic) look for in a neighborhood but lacks others.*
- *A recent survey found more than 1/3 of the properties in the downtown to be in poor or fair condition and many upper floors are underutilized. Approximately 8% of the properties are tax delinquent.*
- *The buildings are predominately multi-story structures (2-4 stories) with no elevators which limit the pool of potential renters and restrict the achievable rents.*
- *The current rent level for apartments in Spencer is modest and rents in the downtown are lower than Spencer at large.*
- *The high cost of renovation/redevelopment, especially given current building conditions, is a significant impediment to creating additional housing units.*
- *There are challenges in working with property owners who “not interested in doing anything with their property at this time.” Assistance and incentives might be necessary to motivate reinvestment.*
- *Need for affordable housing – Downtown convenient location*
- *The Town should partners with a non-profit housing and community development organization, such as SMOC.*
- *Current zoning regulations do not appear to be much of a barrier to development in the core of downtown.*

The 2014 Spencer Property Assessment and Reuse Plan (PARP) Initiative is an on-going effort. This initiative was funded under a CDBG grant, which is administered by Pioneer Valley Planning Commission. For more details the project website link is provided: <http://www.pvpc.org/SpencerPARP>. The PARP project involves assessment and development of reuse recommendations for 50-60 "distressed" properties in Spencer Town Center, focused on key properties that would have the greatest impact on revitalization of Spencer Center. The project is expected to be completed in early 2015.

### ***Development Suitability, Opportunities and Constraints***

Residential Market Demand Opportunity: There is market demand for residential development in this PDA, based on a recent national survey. According to a recent *Better Cities and Towns* e-newsletter article, “a recent national survey by TransitCenter found a big, unmet desire for mixed-use, walkable neighborhoods. TransitCenter is interested, they report, because the kind of neighborhood a person lives in is the primary factor in who takes transit. However, mixed-use doesn't necessarily mean cities. About 18 million people--or six percent of the nation--would like to live in mixed-use suburban neighborhoods, but currently don't. About 10 percent of Americans would like to live in mixed-use small towns, but don't. That gap will create a flow of people moving to fulfill their unmet desires.”<sup>3</sup> More residents living in the Spencer Town Center could then correspond to an increased market demand for commercial and service uses. However, as identified in the Spencer Downtown Housing Study the conditions of many of the buildings within the Town Center acts as a constraint

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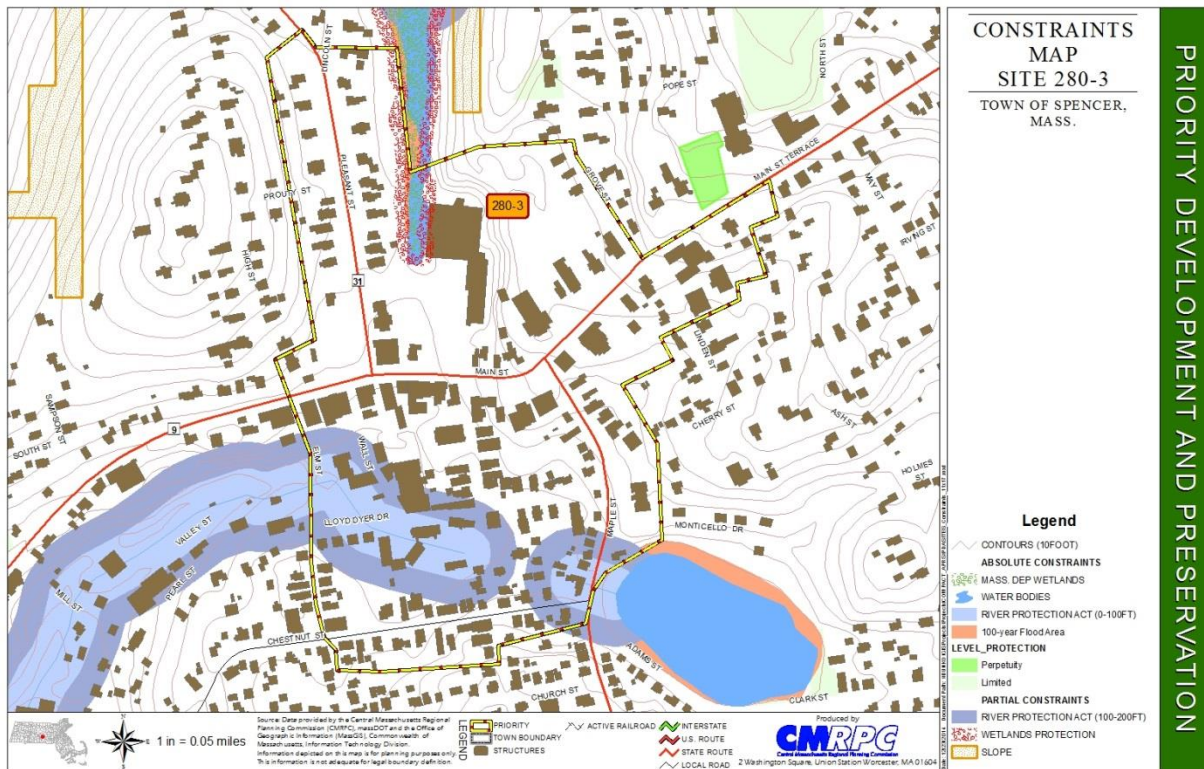
<sup>3</sup> The full article is available at <http://bettercities.net/news-opinion/blogs/robert-steuteville/21350/small-cities-and-towns-are-urban-places-too>

An additional consideration when analyzing commercial development suitability is traffic: the number of cars that travel past the site. CMRPC has identified Average Daily Vehicle Trips (ADT) along this stretch of Route 9 (Main Street) traveling past the site to be in the range of 17,000-18,000 vehicles per day.

The lands within the Spencer Town Center Zoning District are largely built out and there is little vacant, developable land. Therefore, development constraints do not pose much of an issue for the Spencer Town Center PDA as most new development will be of the redevelopment variety. Fortunately, there are not major environmental constraints preventing development or redevelopment with the Spencer Town Center PDA as indicated on Map 4 below. There is the Muzzy Brook stream system flowing out of Muzzy Meadow Pond (Muzzy Brook ultimately flows into the Seven Mile River west of Main Street and Meadow Road) and lands adjacent are subject to the Rivers Protection Act 200 feet from the stream. Given that this area is primarily built up, developers and property owners who are interested in development within this area should contact the Town’s Conservation Commission for more guidance on redevelopment within an existing built-up area.

Unfortunately, the cost to rehabilitate many of the existing buildings within the Town center have been deemed to be economically infeasible, which, therefore, acts as a constraint.

**Map 4: Environmental Constraints within the Spencer Town Center**

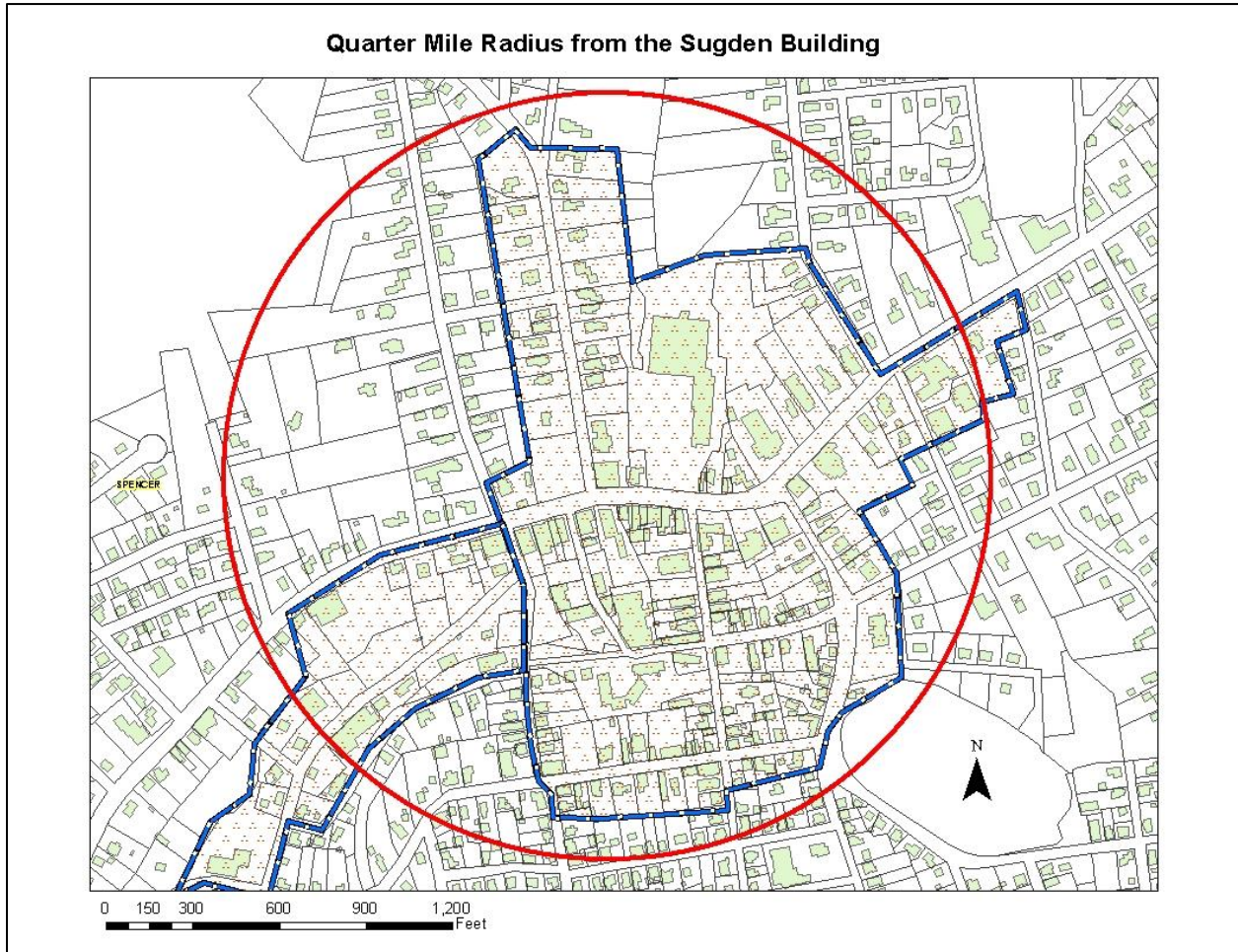


Parking as a Constraint and an Opportunity

The focus of the Spencer Town Center PDA Assessment, as requested by the Town, was to focus on “review of available parking in the Spencer Town Center (including in the Vicinity on the Sugden Block Building), provide an assessment of opportunities for additional shared and common parking areas

(including Town-owned properties)". Based on traditional neighborhood development Principles, a walkable area is generally to be considered a ¼-mile walk, which equates to a 5-minute walk for the average person." CMRPC has mapped out the ¼-mile radius from the Sugden Building in Map 5 on the next page. The map indicates that almost the entire Spencer Town Center Zoning District/PDA is within a ¼-mile from the Sugden Building, thus any parking lot located in this area is considered walkable. CMRPC Staff realizes there is significant topography in part of the Town Center that may make the walk more difficult for some persons, especially young children, the elderly or persons with disabilities (Map 4 on page 10 shows the topography within the Town Center based on 10-foot contours).

**Map 5: Quarter Mile Radius from the Sugden Building**



The availability of parking was addressed in great detail in the STRCPP. CMRPC has noted that the STRCPP author's conducted an inventory and analysis of parking availability in the area of Price Chopper, Sovereign/Town and the immediate on-street parking spaces, which provide information on the existing parking areas near Sugden Building. Of course the Sovereign (now Santander Bank) parking area will be reduced in size due to the Pleasant Street (Route 31) realignment. Given the reduced parking in the Sugden Building area, CMRPC was asked to assess additional shared and common parking areas.

According to the STRCPP authors, there are locations on Main Street with on-street parking and the authors calculated a total of 30 on-street parking spaces. In addition, off-street parking availability in the area immediately adjacent to the Sugden Building includes:



- Sovereign Bank Lot – 74 spaces (CMRPC notes the amount of parking in this lot will be reduced by approximately 25-30 parking spaces when Pleasant Street is realigned as indicated on page 8).
- The Sugden Library Lot – 15 spaces
- Price Chopper Lot – 228 spaces

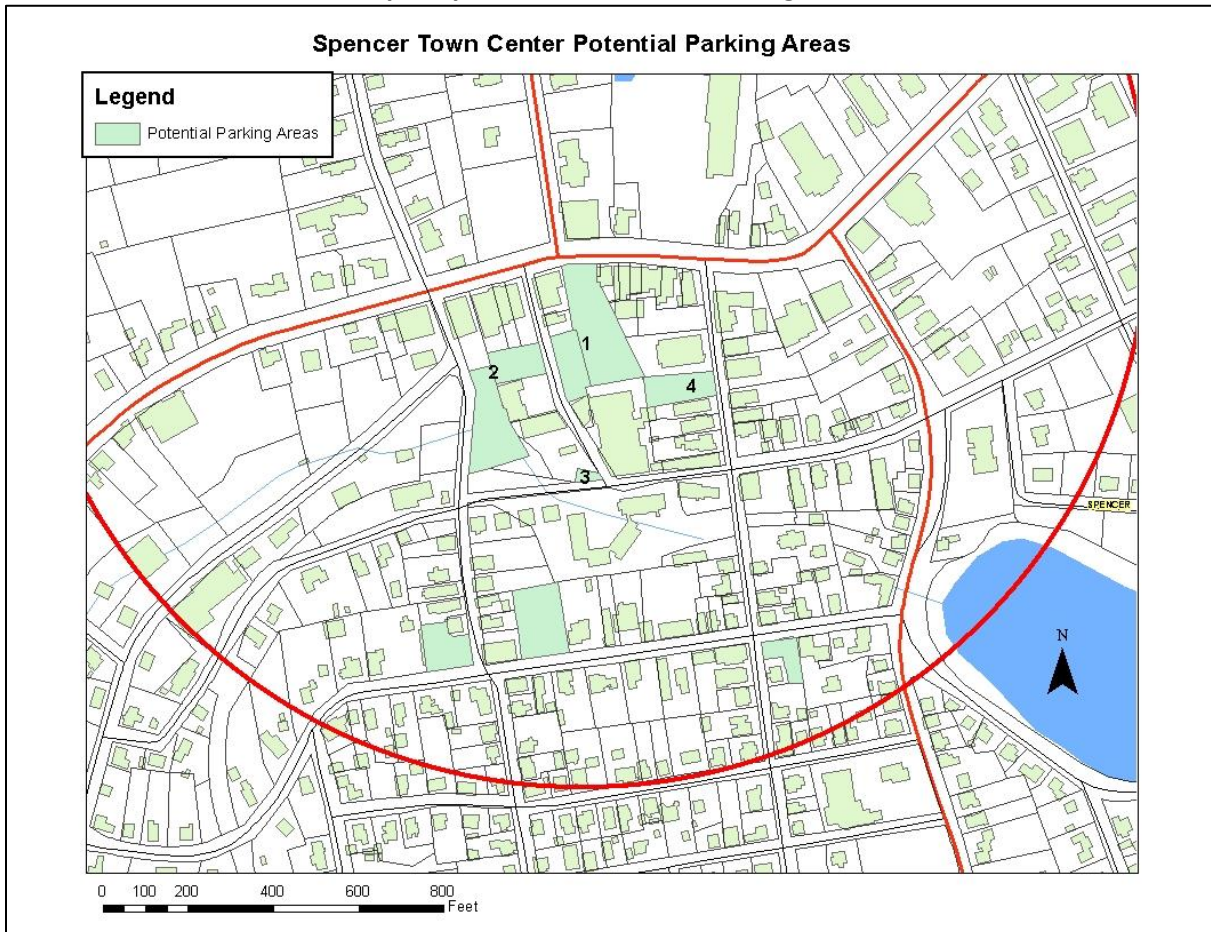
All of the parking identified above is within ¼ mile radius from the Sugden Building.

Areas of opportunity for additional parking lots/spaces were also indicated in the STCRPP:

*“Additional Parking Areas – The Preferred Development Scenarios proposes the creation of several new parking lots south of Main Street off of Wall and Mechanic Streets to increasing the total volume of parking resources in the Town Center and support the adjacent commercial and retail businesses. Increased and evenly distributed parking resources are critical for the success of area businesses and for encouraging pedestrian movement throughout the Town Center.”*

The 2009 STCRPP identified five (5) specific areas where the Plan’s authors believed additional parking could be developed which are located in the Wall and Mechanic Street vicinity. CMRPC has analyzed these areas as part of our PDA assessment and provided our recommendations accordingly. Map 6 shows four (4) of these different parking areas.

**Map 6: Spencer Town Center Parking Areas**





**Parking Opportunity Area #1**

The first area is to the east side of Wall Street to the rear of the Main Street Block. This area is currently not a public parking area. Although parking is utilized in the area it is likely for businesses and tenants in the immediate area. CMRPC identified two parcels that are located in this area that could be explored for a public parking lot (either through direct purchase of 15 Wall Street or some type of lease arrangement). As identified further in the Case Studies and Recommendations sections, the area could perhaps be targeted for a shared parking lot. A template of this approach that could be developed is similar to the “Pilot Parking Strategy for the ‘Walgreens Block’” within the Town of Needham’s Parking Technical Assistance Report prepared under the Massachusetts Downtown Initiative (MDI) Program.

The first property is 15 Wall Street (Parcel U07-30), listed by the Assessors as owned by George Saad and Sons, Inc. (During the course of this Project, CMRPC learned that Mr. Saad passed away and the property is now for sale). This property contains a three-story building located to the rear of the lot with a parking area to the north. The land use code given by assessors is 316, which is “Other Storage, Warehouse and Distribution facilities”, although the building looks vacant. This building has a red x sign on it and According to Peg Barringer, author of the Spencer Downtown Housing Study, “the “red ‘x’ designation is a warning to firefighters indicating a dangerous structure with interior hazards and that defensive firefighting operations should be conducted only from the exterior.” The Property has been identified as one of the properties to focus on as part of the Town’s Property Assessment and Re-use Planning Project (PARP).



*15 Wall Street: building with parking area*



*View into 15 Wall Street and rear of 136 Main St.*



*George Saad Property looking towards 5 Wall Street*



*View into the rear west side of 136 Main Street*

The second property is 136 Main Street (Parcel U07-46), listed by the Assessors as owned by William D. Ekleberry (CMRPC has learned that Ekleberry is deceased and that wife now owns his properties and runs the Old Spencer Inn). This property contains a 3-story mixed-use building that has approximately 25 feet of frontage on Main Street. The rear portion of the lot appears to be currently utilized for parking, perhaps for tenants and/or customers of 136 Main Street, although on two site visits there was parking available. Access to the rear is from a driveway that is located at the current intersection of Main Street and Pleasant Street.

### ***Parking Opportunity Area #2***

The second area is on the west side of Wall Street to the rear of the Main Street block and on the east side of Elm Street). This area does have formalized parking already. A parcel off of Wall Street, identified as “Open Lot” in the 2009 STCRPP, is actually a Town-owned parcel (Parcel U07-28-1) that functions as a parking lot today. The Town-owned lot does see use at this time, perhaps by tenants of some of the surrounding residential properties or employees of nearby businesses. Note on the southerly half of this property there is a grassy area (see Photo). There appears to be no real purpose to this greened area and thus limits existing parking space capacity. CMRPC recommends the Town develop a parking lot plan for this lot, including more formal striping and include a pedestrian walkway (both internally for a connection to the abutting National Grid Lot).



*View of Town-owned Lot – Wall Street west side.*



*Town-owned lot: grassed area*

There were two other parcels on the STCRPP’s recommendations map identified for parking. However, one of them is the rear portion of 116 Main Street in Spencer, which is Spencer Auto Body. Thus, it does not seem this rear area will be available for public parking given the parking seems to be needed for the Auto Body business and there is a significant grade difference too (see photo on page 15). Therefore, this parcel is not recommended by CMRPC for further consideration.





*Walkway between Town-owned lot & National Grid lot; National Grid boundary with Spencer Auto Body*

The second parcel is a 19,000 square-foot parcel owned by the Mass. Electric Company (National Grid), according to the Town's Board of Assessors who give the property a land use code of 390, "Vacant Developable Commercial" by the Assessors. A good portion of this lot is being used for parking today, although there is a stream running through this lot that breaks up the parking areas in two. The 2009 SPCR had indicated 17 parking spaces were in this property. Based on the May 20 site visit and a review of Google Map Aerial Photo, these spaces do not appear to be greatly utilized, especially the spaces located to the rear (see photos below).



*National Grid Parking Areas from Google Maps*



*Sparse usage of the southern National Grid lot*

### ***Parking Opportunity Area #3***

The third area shown makes up a Town-owned parcel (Parcel U07-26) located at the northwest intersection of Wall Street and Lloyd Dyer Drive. This parcel is 4,200 square feet. There is a parking area to the north which is actually fenced in and part of the adjacent property's business. The lot also is east of the vacant Spencer Housing Authority Land, which is used as open space for the residents at the Housing Authority owned housing off of Lloyd Dyer Drive. Therefore, parking opportunity area #3 is just this one Town-owned parcel. Based on CMRPC's two site visits, with the cars parked there (one looks like it was parked there both times, as indicated in the photos below there is capacity for 5-6 spaces. It is possible that people who work in neighboring businesses or associated with the Housing Authority housing are parking here.



*Town-owned parcel at the northwest intersection of Wall Street and Lloyd Dyer Drive*

### ***Parking Opportunity Area #4***

This parking area is the one south of the Post Office, which is located at 10 Mechanic Street. Based on review of the map in the 2009 STCRPP Report, most of this area is already being used for parking at the Town-owned property at 14 Mechanic Street (just south of the Post Office property). There appears to be 4-5 overnight parking spaces at the Mechanic Street lot, one of three (3) lots where such parking is allowed.<sup>4</sup> According to the Assessors Field Card a building at 14 Mechanic Street was destroyed by fire on June 19, 2005 and the Town took ownership of this lot on November 30, 2005.

CMRPC reviewed any opportunity to combine Parking Opportunity Areas #1 and #4, but there is a significant grade change to the rear of 14 Mechanic Street (see photo on page 17). CMRPC Staff also noted with the "No-Trespassing" sign on the Post Office property, that property's parking lot does not appear to be available for public parking.

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<sup>4</sup> The other two overnight parking areas that CMRPC identified are the Santander Bank lot and the rear of the Spencer Town Hall. CMRPC does suggest that marketing of available parking should include available overnight parking.





*View of 14 Mechanic Street parking lot*



*Area where overnight parking is allowed*



*Western property line of 14 Mechanic Street*

### ***Parking Opportunity Area #5***

The Northeast corner of the Mechanic and Cherry St. intersection was the fifth parking area identified in the 2009 STCRPP Report. This area is actually a specific parcel located at 25 Mechanic Street that is owned by Nicholas A. Casello and Jacqueline Mathews and although there is some existing parking there, it appears to be associated with tenants from the 3-family residence. Therefore, CMRPC Staff does not believe this parking area is viable for any shared/common parking and our recommendation is that this property not be further considered.

However, the three Town-owned areas identified above could be better marketed as Common/Shared Parking areas. The Town should have further discussions with National Grid about being able to market/sign the utility company's two parking areas on its Elm Street parcel.

## Other Identified Parking Opportunity Areas

CMRPC Staff have identified other alternatives to the 5<sup>th</sup> parking opportunity area discussed above, given its status as private property. Through our assessment we have found three (3) additional potential parking areas that are located more in the southern portion of the Town Center District away from Main Street, but still within the ¼-mile radius of the Sugden Building area. These properties are identified on Map 5 as the unnumbered green shaded properties and are as follows:

1. The Laundromat lot at 55 Mechanic Street (Parcel # U07-216) owned by Azov Corporation. This site was identified by the Town Administrator and Town Planner during the April 17, 2014 Project Kick-off meeting.



*Laundromat @ 55 Mechanic Street Parking Lot*

2. Gaudette's lot at 60 Chestnut Street (Parcel # U08-49) owned by Francis X Gaudette. The property was formerly the Gaudette's grocery store and it is now used as a canine education center by the American Poodles At Work non-profit organization.



*60 Chestnut Street Parking Lot*

Given that the laundromat and Gaudette’s parking lots are privately-owned at this time, with uses in each building on the respective lot, the shared parking model could be explored here (similar to the Potential Opportunity Area #1).

3. Town of Spencer-owned Lot at 46-48 Chestnut Street (Parcel # U07-12). This property was proposed for affordable housing in the 2008 Planning For Affordable Housing study. However, given the presence of Spencer Housing Authority’s affordable housing development, the presence of many existing housing units (many of which do need rehabilitation) and the Town-owned Cherry Street Fire Station, which was also recommended for affordable housing in the 2008 Affordable Housing study, CMRPC Staff believes there are other opportunities for affordable housing development. What is lacking in the Town Center is useable open space and this 0.42-acre (18,295.2 square feet) vacant lot represents an opportunity to be used as both open space and some additional parking.



*Town of Spencer-owned Property at 46-48 Chestnut Street*

### Gateways

A second area of focus requested by the Town of Spencer was treatment of Gateways into the Spencer Town Center. Gateways were an issued identified within the 2009 STCRPP:

*“Gateway Events – The Preferred Development Scenario includes four gateway events on each of the primary entrances into the Town Center. The gateway events are located on the east and west ends of Main Street as well as at Muzzy Meadow Pond on Maple Street and the intersection of Pleasant and Main Streets. These gateway events reinforce the Town Center as a specific location and destination. The three Main Street gateway events are anticipated to be variations on the streetscape design that runs through Main Street. The gateway event at Muzzy Meadow Pond can use its unique location to create a more distinct feature such as a deck and walk overlooking the pond.”*

CMRPC did review the four (4) gateways with the Town Administrator and Town Planner and we have identified a more specific geographic area associated with each gateway:

1. The Gateway to the west end of Main Street is suggested to be at High Street



2. The Gateway to the east end of Main Street is front of Town Hall
3. The Gateway for those coming to Spencer Town Center from the north is suggested to be at Intersection of Main/Pleasant Street.
4. The Gateway for those coming to Spencer Town Center from the south is suggested to be at Maple Street – Muzzy Pond (Chestnut Street and/or Cherry Street provide access for parking).

As stated in the 2009 STCRPP: *“The four gateway features proposed by the Preferred Development Scenario provide additional opportunities to enhance the pedestrian environment with unique features, sculptures, a performance space or natural resource observation areas. The additional parking in dispersed locations becomes critically important to pedestrian activity, because of the challenging topography of Spencer’s Town Center. **Increased parking resources in alternative locations provide individuals the opportunity to park and walk through different areas of the Town Center without facing the physically challenging grade changes** (emphasis added).”*



*Muzzy Meadow Pond / Maple Street Gateway*

Based on CMRPC Staff’s site visit and assessment, it appears that the Town did a very limited streetscape improvement in front of Muzzy Meadow Pond off of Maple Street, with only the installation of a bench. No trees or landscaping were provided (see photos above). Therefore, we recommend additional tree planting and landscaping to enhance this southern gateway. The DCR Urban Forestry Program represents a potential funding source given limited Town fiscal resources (see the *“Potential grant and funding resources”* section). CMRPC notes that our 25-hour technical assistance effort did not allow for a more detailed analysis with further recommendations related to the gateways or streetscape components beyond the Muzzy Meadow Pond Gateway. The Town could apply for additional DLTA assistance in 2015 or make use of their Local Planning Assistance (LPA) hours, upon request, for this analysis.

**Case Studies:**

City of Melrose: The City of Melrose is one community that made use of the MDI program for assistance in the area of parking. One recommendation that was provided to the City of Melrose was to develop a Parking Map Postcard (see page 22 for this example). Although a review of the City’s parking website (<http://www.cityofmelrose.org/departments/parking-office/>) indicates they have not developed this parking map postcard yet, they do currently list location of overnight parking areas. The Town of



Spencer could develop a similar postcard for the existing parking areas as identified in this and previous reports (and update accordingly when new parking areas are developed). The location of overnight parking areas could be included in such marketing. This information can then be posted on the Town’s website and displayed at Town Hall.

**Parking in Downtown Melrose • Final Report**  
MASSACHUSETTS DOWNTOWN INITIATIVE

## 2. Improve Parking Information

Parking information in Melrose is lacking in several areas and would greatly benefit from improvements that effectively guide visitors to the many parking options.

- Parking Map Postcard** –The City should create a parking information postcard (see example below) that clearly depicts the different parking options, as both an online resource as well as printed versions for use by businesses to hand out to patrons/clients. The postcard should also be distributed more broadly, including display in prominent visitor locations and local bulletins. More importantly, this information should be made easily available on the City’s website so that those planning a visit to the downtown will know in advance where to find parking.

**Downtown Melrose Public Parking**

Town of Needham: The Town of Needham also made use of the MDI program in the area of parking. One element of this report of interest to the Town of Spencer is that some of the potential parking to make better use of for shared parking is privately-owned. In Needham’s case, there was a Walgreens parking lot as well as other existing privately-owned parking nearby.<sup>5</sup> Of note, this Report indicates how “Few examples of applying successful shared parking arrangements to existing parking facilities have been identified that do not involve either direct acquisition by a municipality or a leasehold arrangement. The consulting team recognized that many of the landowner concerns listed... (in the report) are only surmountable given sufficient return on investment to the property owner.” The consultants then go on to provide a Pilot Lease Arrangement based on realizing the existing land value of parking. The Town of Spencer Officials should review this report further and would probably be best served from applying again to the MDI program in late 2015, as the consultants who work on the parking aspects of the MDI

<sup>5</sup> The full report of the Town of Needham Parking MDI Technical Assistance Report is available via the following link: <http://www.mass.gov/hed/docs/dhcd/cd/md/parking-needham.pdf>. See page 16 for the “Pilot Parking Strategy for the “Walgreens Block””.

program, Nelson\Nygaard Consulting Associates, Inc., are a nationally-recognized and leading consultant in the field of parking management.

### *Recommendations and Next Steps*

#### Zoning-Related

Based on CMRPC's Staff zoning assessment for the Spencer Town Center PDA Project, a number of zoning-related recommendations have emerged. We do note, as indicated in the October 2013 *Spencer Downtown Housing Study* and reiterated in this report, it is not the Town of Spencer's Zoning Bylaws that are the inhibiting factor to further redevelopment in the Town of Spencer. Most of our recommendations are some minor zoning modifications and the only glaring omission from the zoning bylaw is a shared parking provision.

- The number one (1) priority zoning recommendation is for the Town of Spencer to develop a Shared Parking provision within the Town's Zoning Bylaw. As indicated in the zoning review section, such a provision is currently lacking. CMRPC Staff provides examples of shared parking zoning bylaw provisions from a number of towns in Appendix A of this Report.
- CMRPC Staff had noted one agricultural-related use not expressly permitted is "Farmers Markets." We recommend such a use be allowed by-right (perhaps with Site Plan Review) in the Town Center.
- Currently drive in/drive thru uses are allowed by-right in the Town Center. CMRPC recommends the Town change this restaurant category to be allowed by Special Permit in the Town Center Zoning District, which will allow the Planning Board to assess any such future uses for impact on traffic, noise, etc. in the Town Center.
- Large Scale Wind Energy Conversion Device is allowed in the Town Center by Special Permit. CMRPC Staff questions if the Spencer Town Center is an appropriate place for a large wind turbine and we believe that such larger facilities are better sited in less dense neighborhoods. Therefore, CMRPC Staff recommends changing this to a prohibited use in the Town Center.
- Our Zoning Assessment noted how there is no side and rear perimeter buffer In the Town Center district, CMRPC Staff noticed how for the other zoning districts a side and rear buffer is required for uses that are abutting on residential use. CMRPC Staff noted our support for the idea of having an increased buffer for business uses that abut residential uses and we recommend that the Town provide at least some side and rear buffer between commercial and industrial-related uses in the TC District when abutting residential uses, perhaps 5 feet.

#### Parking-related

- The Town should promote and market existing parking areas, including overnight parking areas, in the form of a postcard map that can be posted on the Town's website and placed in Town Hall and local businesses.

- The Town should further consider development of the additional parking areas as identified within this Report.
- The Town should work with existing businesses and property owners to formalize shared parking arrangements and promote such shared parking opportunities through signage. CMRPC Staff understands the complexity associated with development of new shared parking opportunities. Therefore, we recommend the Town apply for MDI funding in late 2015 for more assistance in this area.

Streetscape/Amenity/Open Space:

- The current 25% Design Plans for the Main Street Reconstruction and Pleasant Street Realignment Project do not include streetscape elements. The Town should work with MassDOT to further the objective of enhanced streetscape components as identified in the 2009 STCRPP and the Master Plan are included. This includes addressing the four Gateways into the Town Center as discussed on pages 19-20.
- Although the Town of Spencer has excellent park facilities, the Town needs something in the Town Center that is child-friendly to help make the Town Center a destination for families. CMRPC Staff has identified the Town-owned lot on Chestnut Street as potential for both parking and open space. Realizing the Town has limited resources, perhaps a private/public partnership or a regional approach to park and recreation could allow a more formalized playground to be constructed and maintained on that lot.
- The realignment of Pleasant Street does allow the opportunity for a development of a pocket park in the Town Center. The Town should work closely with MassDOT on this matter, as a pocket park adjacent to the Sugden Building would be an amenity.
- The Town should work with local/regional land trusts to explore the opportunity to connect the regional trail network, including the Mid-State Trail to the Spencer Town Center.

*Potential grant and funding resources to assist with implementation*

Below are a number of state, federal, non-profit, and regional potential grant and funding sources that could assist with implementation. CMRPC Staff provides these as they represent tools in a “planning toolbox” that can be utilized for further planning and/or implementation of the opportunities and recommendations provided in this Report.

State-related Resources:

- The State’s Economic Development Fund (EDF) finances projects and programs that create and/or retain jobs, improve the local and/or regional tax base, or otherwise enhance the quality of life in the community. EDF gives priority assistance for physical improvements in support of job creation/retention and downtown/commercial center revitalization. CMRPC Staff notes the EDF represents a potential source of Funding/Financing for an elevator as part of a building rehabilitation project. The Town of Southbridge recently submitted a successful application and will be receiving EDF funding. The Town will need to have a current DHCD-approved slum and



blight study to be eligible for EDF funds. For more information:

<http://www.mass.gov/hed/community/funding/economic-development-fund-edf.html>

- Massachusetts Downtown Initiative (MDI): The Town of Spencer is familiar with the DHCD's Massachusetts Downtown Initiative (MDI) program which is designed to offer a range of services and assistance to communities seeking help on how to revitalize their downtowns. The Town will have missed out on the FY '15 deadline (December 4<sup>th</sup>). Hopefully the program will continue as it represents a potential funding source for a more detailed parking study of this PDA (The State makes use of Nelson Nygaard Consulting Associates, a leading parking management and planning consultant firm), more detailed streetscape design planning (including wayfinding) and even walkability, as the State added this component this year: *“Requests for assistance may address development of recommendations regarding such aspects of downtown walkability as: improving safety at intersections or along main street areas; enhancement of the walking environment through such elements as landscaping and improved maintenance; reviewing the ease of walking routes between destinations such as shops, civic buildings and parking areas; or how increasing walkability can be a tool to create lively public places.”* This walkability component may also be able to assist the Town with the streetscape component of the Main Street reconstruction project.

For more information: <http://www.mass.gov/hed/community/funding/massachusetts-downtown-initiative-mdi.html>.

- MassDevelopment: MassDevelopment's Real Estate Pre-Development Services offer the opportunity for market feasibility analysis and site planning assistance for the Sugden Block Building and any other Town-owned property within the Town Center.  
For more information: <http://www.massdevelopment.com/real-estate-development/>

- DCR Urban Forestry Grant Program: The Town of Charlton has added a number of street trees around their Charlton Village District by making use of the Mass. Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) Urban and Community Forestry Grants. Then Town of Spencer may be able to utilize this grant program to help with tree plantings around Muzzy Meadow Pond and other areas within the Town Center. The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) Urban and Community Forestry Program offers 50-50 matching grants<sup>6</sup> to municipalities and nonprofit groups in Massachusetts communities of all sizes for the purpose of building local capacity for excellent urban and community forestry at the local and regional level. This grant offering is a combination of our previous grant opportunities (Mass ReLeaf, Planning and Education, and Heritage Tree Grants, and Environmental Justice). Applications are due May 1 or November 1 and the intent to apply form is due at least one month prior to the application deadline but can be submitted at any time.

For more information: <http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/dcr/conservation/forestry-and-fire-control/urban-and-community-forestry.html>. Contact Julie Coop, Urban & Community Forestry Coordinator, [Julie.coop@state.ma.us](mailto:Julie.coop@state.ma.us) or 617-626-1468.

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<sup>6</sup> Match requirement for environmental justice projects is 75-25. Given the number of brownfields and existing socioeconomic characteristics of residents in some parts of the Spencer Town Center, the Town should inquire what areas may qualify as environmental justice projects.

### *Federal Resources:*

Historic District Tax Credits: Given that most of the Spencer Town Center PDA is included within the Spencer Center National Register District, property owners can get a financial benefit in the form of tax credits for property rehabilitation (see the following link for additional information: <http://www.nps.gov/tps/tax-incentives.htm>).

HOPE VI Main Street Program: This program is a potential funding source if Federal Budget includes this program for funding in FY 15 and beyond. The Main Street program seeks to rejuvenate older, downtown business districts while retaining the area's traditional and historic character. To do this, the Main Street program provides assistance to smaller communities in the development of affordable housing that is undertaken in connection with a Main Street revitalization effort. Obsolete commercial offices or buildings can be reconfigured into rent producing affordable housing. Congress appropriates funds for Main Street annually. Although the latest NOFA allows for awards in both FY 2014 and FY2015, funds are only available for the current fiscal year. FY 2015 funds have not yet been appropriated for this program. The award of FY 2015 Main Street funds to FY 2014 applicants is contingent upon future congressional action. HUD's intent to award FY 2015 funds to FY 2014 applicants will be announced separately if such funds become available.

For more information:

[http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program\\_offices/public\\_indian\\_housing/programs/ph/hope6/grants/mainstreet](http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/public_indian_housing/programs/ph/hope6/grants/mainstreet)

### Non Profit-related Resources

Since the Town does not have the capacity or interest to create a Community Development Corporation (CDC), the Town should consider partnering with existing organizations such as the (South Middlesex Opportunity Council (SMOC) for housing and WBDC (for economic development). CMRPC Staff believes WBDC represents an entity that could help with the Sugden Building sale initiative, for example.

For more information visit SMOC's website: <http://www.smoc.org/>. Agency Contact: Françoise Elise, MSW (LMW13), 508-626-7129 or [felise@SMOC.org](mailto:felise@SMOC.org).

For WBDC, visit their website: <http://www.thewbdc.com/>. Agency Contact: Lisa Drexhage, [Drexhage@worcesterbdc.com](mailto:Drexhage@worcesterbdc.com) or 508.755.5734.

### CMRPC-related Resources

DLTA funds will be available in 2015, which can offer the opportunity for CMRPC Staff to build on this Spencer Town Center PDA assessment related to gateways, streetscape or other areas of interest.

CMRPC could also conduct an assessment of the Town's other PDAs upon request and available funding.

CMRPC Transportation Staff may be able to help with some of the streetscape-related planning. Contact Mary Ellen Blunt, Program Manager, at (p) 508-459-3337 or email @ [mblunt@cmrpc.org](mailto:mblunt@cmrpc.org).

## **Appendix A:**

### **Shared Parking Example Bylaws and Background Information**



## **Appendix A: Shared Parking Example Bylaws and Background Information**

### **Town of Ashburnham**

Section 5.34 Parking in the Village Center Zoning District and in a Planned Unit Development (PUD)

The standards of Section 5.32 must be met for the additional parking demand created by new buildings, additions or changes of use unless, in performing a Site Plan Review and Approval under Section 5.10 or issuing a Special Permit under the provisions of Section 5.19, Planned Unit Development (PUD), the Planning Board determines that special circumstances dictate a different provision in order to meet all parking needs. In performing a Site Plan Review and issuing a PUD Special Permit, the Planning Board may authorize a smaller number of parking spaces because of staggered hours of use or other circumstances. The Planning Board shall determine all parking space calculations based on information in the most recent edition of the Parking Generation manual by the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE), on studies and surveys done by qualified persons regarding parking, on parking requirements and use for similar facilities in the Montachusett region and/or other appropriate information.

(Revision approved by ATM 5-5-12, approved by Attorney General 8-30-12)

### **Town of Maynard**

Section 9.4 is the Downtown Mixed-Use Overlay District (DOD). Section 9.4.9.3 is the section that addresses Mixed Use and Shared Parking and that references Section 6.1 for more information.

Section 6.1 is the Town's Parking and Loading Standards section of the Zoning Bylaw.

See Section 6.1.7 "Mixed Use Requirements and Shared Parking" – which reads as follows:

The use of shared parking to fulfill parking demands noted above that occur at different times of day is strongly encouraged, and allowed through Site Plan Approval.

1. Parking requirements for a proposed development may be met if the applicant can demonstrate that shared spaces will meet parking demands by using accepted methodologies (e.g. the Urban Land Institute Shared Parking Report, ITE Shared Parking Guidelines, or other generally accepted studies).
2. A request for shared used parking to meet minimum parking requirements must be made through the site plan review application.

### **MAPC's Shared Parking Website:**

The Metropolitan Area Planning Commission (MAPC), which is the Regional Planning Agency that serves the greater Metro Boston area and has an extensive shared parking website:

<http://www.mapc.org/resources/parking-toolkit/strategies-topic/shared-parking>

Three local examples are provided within their Shared Parking Resource webpage, which are provided below:

**City of Marlborough Zoning By-Law, §200-25 Off-Street Parking.**

**Summary: The City of Marlborough allows shared parking in all districts for uses with different peak periods, allowing reductions of up to one-half of the minimum parking required for the uses separately. The city requires documentation of the reduced parking demand as well as additional provision of open space for each parking space not provided as a result of shared parking**

**Full Text:**

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B. Application of Parking Requirements.

(3) [amended 4-23-90 by Ord. No. 89/90-3111] Common Parking Areas and Mixed Uses. Parking required for two (2) or more buildings or uses may be provided in combined parking facilities where such facilities will continue to be available for the several buildings or uses and provided that the total number of spaces is not less than the sum of the spaces required for each use individually, except that said number of spaces may be reduced by up to one-half (1/2) such sum if it can be demonstrated that the hours or days of peak parking need for the uses are so different that a lower total will provide adequately for all uses served by the facility. The following requirements shall be met:

(a) Evidence of reduced parking needs shall be documented and based on accepted planning and engineering practice satisfactory to the City Planner and Engineer.

(b) If a lower total is approved, no change in any use shall thereafter be permitted without further evidence that the parking will remain adequate in the future, and if said evidence is not satisfactory, then additional parking shall be provided before a change in use is authorized.

(c) Evidence of continued availability of common or shared parking areas shall be provided satisfactory to the City Solicitor and shall be documented and filed with the Site Plan.

(d) The determination of how a combined or multiuse facility shall be broken down into its constituent components shall be made by the Planning Department.

(e) If any reduction in the total number of parking spaces is allowed as a result of this subsection, then one hundred fifty (150) square feet of open space (per parking space reduced) shall be provided in addition to that required by lot coverage provisions of this Chapter.

**Waltham, MA: Shared Parking from Town's Zoning Code, Part III. ARTICLE V. Parking Requirements, updated 8-2006**

**Summary: In the City of Waltham, the parking requirement for any mixed use parcel or building is calculated based on the method described at MAPC's Shared Parking Website Toolkit. The ordinance provides the time table of parking requirements by use.**

**Full Text:**

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Sec.5.2. Off-street parking requirements.

5.22 Footnotes.

(c) Notwithstanding any other parking requirements set forth in this chapter for individual land uses, when any land or building is used for two or more distinguishable purposes (i.e., joint or mixed use development), the minimum total number of parking spaces required to serve the combination of all uses shall be determined in the following manner

Multiply the minimum parking requirement for each individual use (as set forth in the applicable section of this chapter for each use) by the appropriate percentage (as set forth below in the Parking Credit Schedule Chart) for each of the five designated time periods and then add the resulting sums from each vertical column. The column total having the highest total value is the minimum shared parking space requirement for that combination of land uses.

**Parking Credit Schedule Chart**

	<b>Weekday</b>	<b>Weekday</b>	<b>Weekday</b>	<b>Weekend</b>	<b>Weekend</b>
	Night Midnight to 7:00 a.m. (percent)	Day 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (percent)	Evening 5:00 p.m. to Midnight (percent)	Day 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. (percent)	Evening 6:00 p.m. to Midnight (percent)
Residential	100	60	90	80	90
Office/Industrial	5	100	10	10	5
Commercial/Retail	5	80	90	100	70
Hotel	70	70	100	70	100
Restaurant	10	50	100	50	100
Restaurant associated with hotel	10	50	60	50	60
Entertainment/recreation (theaters, bowling allies, cocktail lounges and similar)	10	40	100	80	100
Day-care facilities	5	100	10	20	5
All other	100	100	100	100	100

**Stoneham, MA: Flexible Requirements and Shared Parking included in the Town’s Zoning Bylaws, §6.0 General Provisions Affecting All Districts**

**Summary: The Town of Stoneham allows shared parking by special permit with the approval of the Planning Board. Up to 50% of required spaces may be shared with uses having different operating hours. The parties must sign a joint use agreement.**

**Full Text:**



## **6.3 Off-Street Parking Requirements:**

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### **6.3.8 SPECIAL PERMITS FOR PARKING**

6.3.8.1 Special permit for a change in parking space requirements: the number of off street parking spaces required by section 6.3.3, of this by law for a use or uses in the Central Business District and in the Commercial I District for Banquet Facilities, Function Halls and Dinner Theaters may be changed by Special permit in accordance with the following provisions:

(1) Special permit criteria: The Planning Board, by special permit, may allow remote parking lots, or shared parking lots which it deems reasonable, based on the following criteria, and other applicable provisions presented in this subsection:

- (a) The capacity, location and current level of use of existing parking facilities, both public and private;
- (b) The efficient and maximum use in terms of parking needs and services provided;
- (c) The relief of traffic and parking congestion;
- (d) The safety of pedestrians;
- (e) The provision of reasonable access either by walking distance or shuttle vehicle arrangements;
- (f) The maintenance of the character of the area.

(2) The following are allowed by Special Permit:

A. The substitution of parking spaces within municipal parking lots in lieu of or in reduction to the parking requirements of this section, provided they are located within 1600 feet of the building which is intended to be served.

B. A reduction in parking space requirements: The number of off-street parking spaces required by Section 6.3.3 of this bylaw for a use or uses in the non-residential districts may be reduced by special permit in accordance with the following provisions:

(1) Shared parking: Shared private parking facilities for different buildings or uses may be allowed by Special Permit, subject to the following provisions:

- (a) Up to fifty percent (50%) of the parking spaces serving a building may be used jointly for other uses not normally open, used or operated during similar hours. The applicant must show that the peak parking demand and principal operating hours for each use are suitable for a common parking facility.
- (b) A written agreement defining the joint use acceptable to the Planning Board of the common parking facility shall be executed by all parties concerned and approved by the Planning Board as part of the special permit process. Such agreement shall be recorded at the Middlesex Registry of Deeds.

(c) Any subsequent change in land uses for which the shared parking proposal was approved, and which results in the need for additional parking spaces, shall require a new special permit application under this subsection.

(2) Remote parking: Remote (satellite) parking areas may be authorized by the Planning Board by special permit, subject to the following provisions:

(a) The satellite parking spaces will be used solely by the employees and, where practicable, clientele of the commercial use;

(b) The off-site parking spaces shall be located to adequately serve the proposed use and shall be within six hundred (600) feet of the building served for clientele of the commercial use. Off-site parking for employees of the business may be located within a distance of one thousand two hundred (1,200) feet, unless shuttle vehicle arrangements are provided as a condition of the special permit. The parking distance shall be measured by the shortest route of pedestrian access, entrance to entrance.

(3) Pedestrian access: Any proposals submitted, which, in the opinion of the Planning Board, provide direct and vital pedestrian access to other abutting commercial properties and serve to improve pedestrian accessibility may reduce the number of parking spaces required by fifteen percent (15%). Pedestrian access shall be provided enough improved pathways, stairway access or other physical improvements, and such access shall be clearly marked.

#### **Urban Land Institute (ULI) Model**

CMRPC is aware of the ULI model for shared parking calculations, but it is proprietary and we were not able to locate/purchase it. See the MAPC link that provides reference to this model and info for purchase.

[http://uli.bookstore.ipgbook.com/shared-parking-products-9780874209396.php?page\\_id=21](http://uli.bookstore.ipgbook.com/shared-parking-products-9780874209396.php?page_id=21) Cost is \$69.95.

#### **Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning Shared Parking Resource**

Shared Parking is a topic in the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP)'s April 2012 "Parking Strategies to Support Livable Communities" Report and page 22 has been attached to this Appendix to provide some additional background information on the shared parking concept.