B1 Zoning Committee – Executive Summary

B1 Committee Mission:
- Plan for and promote a financially viable and diverse Town center
- Capitalize on and enhance the existing Town center character
- Plan for forecasted population growth of 10-20% (1000-2400 people) over 10-30 years
- Proactively deter unfriendly 40B projects
- Update the B1 District (Town center) zoning by-law regulations

Zoning By-laws in review:

ARTICLE 21

A Residential Density (l.4.a.11)
Residential Density addresses the volume of housing that can be built on any single lot – In other words, just how many units of housing are allowed on each site

Existing zoning language:
- Allows for 16 “bedrooms” per “lot”
- Limits bedroom count to “two bedrooms” per “unit”
- with an exception for Planned Multi Lot Developments and Assisted Living Facilities
- no other exceptions, unless by special permit approval

Current Recommendation(s):
- Change to 16 “units” per “acre”
- Remove language limiting bedroom count
- Remove language addressing Assisted Living Facilities
- Maintain language addressing no other exceptions, unless by special permit approval

B Shared Parking (l.6.a)
Shared Parking addresses the ability of an applicant to prove that the mixed use of their site creates efficiencies in parking, often spread throughout the day rather than focused on peak time, that would allow lowering the required number of parking spaces.

Existing zoning language:
- Allows for a 30% reduction in required parking count, if demonstrated and approved through a special permit process
- Requires the provision of a reserved area to accommodate potential future parking expansion, to be reviewed every three years by the Planning Board at the request of the Zoning official

Current Recommendation(s):
- Keep the existing, allowable 30% parking reduction
- Change the language requiring special permit approval for parking reduction to approval, by the Planning Board, thru the already required Site Plan Approval process
- Remove the requirement for the “reserve parking area” and the review thereof every three years, if 30% parking reduction is approved by the Planning Board

ARTICLE 22

1 Building Scale (l.4.a.1)
Building scale addresses the allowable area of the footprint of a building on a site - In other words, just how big the ground floor of a building can be

Existing zoning language:
- Limits all new buildings to 15,000 SF
- Except for municipal buildings (30,000 sf) and a grocery store (50,000 SF)

Current recommendation(s):
- Cap the maximum footprint, of any single, new building at 20,000 SF
- No exceptions, unless by special permit approval

2 Planned Multi Lot Development (l.4.a.2)
Address provisions for a larger development

Existing zoning language:
- Refer to Zoning By-Laws for further information

Current Recommendation(s):
- Remove all references to “Planned Multi Lot Development” from all sections
Building Height (I.4.a.6)
Building height addresses the allowable height that any building can be above the average grade level of the lot – In other words, just how tall a building can be.

Existing zoning language:
- Allows 40 feet to the roof peak, with an exception to allow 46 feet per special permit approval
- In no case shall a building exceed 3 stories
- Other decorative features of the building can exceed the height requirement, with a max height of 80 feet
- Language addresses façade detailing and that all buildings shall have the look of pitched/sloped roofs

Current Recommendation(s):
- Change allowable height to 46 feet to the highest point
- Change the allowable number of stories to 3 1/2
- No change to decorative features language
- No change to façade detailing and buildings look language

Set back (I.4.b.1.A)
A “setback” is the distance from the lot line than a building can be built to. This specific setback addresses the condition where a Commercial lot, in the B1 District, is directly adjacent to a Residential lot – In other words, if a commercial lot is next to a residential lot than the commercial building must be 50 feet away from the property line it shares with the residential lot.

As a point of clarification, if the residential lot is across the street from a commercial lot this by-law would not apply – the residential lot must be adjacent to the commercial lot for this by-law to apply.

Existing zoning language:
- Identifies a 50ft setback requirement
- Exceptions to be approved by Zoning Board

Current Recommendation(s):
- Keep the 50ft setback requirement
- Change the review of exceptions to the Planning Board

Land Use (I.7 and I.7.a)
Land use commonly addresses the type of project and/or occupancy type allowed in any given district – In other words, a list of allowable uses of the lot.

Existing Zoning Language:
- The existing by law lists the allowable uses

Current Recommendation(s):
- Maintains the list of allowable uses
- Modify the general language to include the requirement for mixed-use development; that includes residential units and commercial uses
- Add language defining “primary buildings” as those with street frontage
- Add language requiring the ground floor of primary buildings to have no residential units and to be a minimum of 80% commercial/retail space or appurtenant uses of commercial/retail space
- Add language defining “secondary buildings” as those not having street frontage
- Add language allowing secondary buildings to be 100% residential
- Add a requirement for 15-20% affordable housing

ARTICLE 23
Map of B1 Inner and Outer District

Existing Map
- Map Shows B1 Inner and Outer Districts

Current Recommendation(s):
- New Map adjusts Inner District to cover essentially just properties most likely to be developed or redeveloped
- New map revises Outer District to cover remainder of B1 properties

Note: This summary is not a complete itemization of the proposed zoning by law changes. For a complete list of “discussion items” refer to the Planning Board page on the Town website (https://Norfolk.ma.us)