

Task Force On Neighborhood Density
City of East Lansing

Final Report
and Recommendations

February 7, 1994

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TASK FORCE ON NEIGHBORHOOD DENSITY MISSION STATEMENT (Restated)

The occupancy intensity of residential properties in our urban neighborhoods, and the inherent conflicts that intensity creates, present social, legal, and economic challenges for the City, its residents, its property owners and developers, and for City staff, Council and volunteer advisors.

The Task Force is charged with providing an interim report to City Council before proceeding with subsequent tasks. Due in January 1993, the report should address:

- a statement of goals and philosophies related to the conditions of the high quality residential living to be attained if final recommendations are carried out.
- identification of issues of livability that are subject to conflicting philosophies requiring resolution.

In developing both the interim report and final recommendations, the Task Force should examine, but not be limited to, the following:

- provisions of the Zoning Code (Chapter 55) that regulate residential density and its impacts, including:
 - family definition
 - lot size restrictions
 - on-site and on-street parking
 - parking waivers
 - proximity of zoning districts and the strength of district edges
 - economics of owning residential property
- provisions of the Housing Code (Chapter 101) and related codes that regulate:
 - housing licensing and occupancy limitations
 - preservation of housing
 - noise, neighborhood security and other behavioral issues
- provisions of Ordinance 644 - Nondiscrimination - and other provisions relating to access and opportunity for housing

The Task Force will provide City Council a final report of its findings including recommendations and strategies for carrying out the stated goals. The target date set for the final report is July 1, 1993.

TASK FORCE ON NEIGHBORHOOD DENSITY MEMBERSHIP

The Task Force, appointed by and reporting to City Council, represents a diverse interest group of community member volunteers. Throughout the 16 months we have met, these members have made significant contributions as participants of the task force.

Neighborhoods/Residents

Bailey Community Association	Bonnie Sumbler
Central Neighborhood Association	Jim Ludwig, Chair
Red Cedar Neighborhood Association	Joanne Russell, Subcommittee Chair

Property Owners/Developers

Citizens for Fair Housing	Owen Irvine
Hamco Management	Dave Stewart
Krause Properties	David Krause

MSU Students/Off-Campus Residents

A.S.M.S.U.	Erin Steel, Jason Richards, Brandy Moore
Panhellenic Council	Leah Mac, Jennifer Tourangeau
Off-Campus Council	James Monty
Housing Resource Center	Maria Spielberg, Vice Chair

E.L. Council, Boards/Commissions

Building Board of Appeals	Allen Drouare
Housing & CD Commission	Albert Cavasos
Human Relations Commission	Robert Baer, Subcommittee Chair
Planning Commission	Beth Van Liere, Subcommittee Chair
Zoning Board of Appeals	David Molenaar

E.L. City Staff

City Manager	Tom Dority
Assistant to City Manager	Dawn Flynn
Director of Planning	Bob Owen

E.L. City Council

Liaison	Dianne Schwartz
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FINAL REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction and Background

The City's urban neighborhoods are a key element in defining the East Lansing community. The many beautiful houses and older homes along tree-lined streets in these neighborhoods are an integral part of the City's image. These neighborhoods are of tremendous value to the City, not only in direct economic terms, but also in affording a great variety of quality housing options for the many families and individuals that reside there. These neighborhoods accommodate the broad diversity of people who help make East Lansing such an exciting and enjoyable place to live.

While the maturity of these neighborhoods, their proximity to the downtown and campus and the rich diversity of those who reside in them are tremendous assets, these characteristics also pose certain challenges. Effectively meeting these challenges must continue to be a major focus of the City's efforts. Older structures require careful maintenance and repair to sustain their condition and value. Aging public facilities require upgrading or replacement to continue to provide adequate service. In addition, these neighborhoods have reached a saturation point of population, vehicles, noise and pollution. Abating the negative influences from within and without, the neighborhoods will preserve the value, appearance, safety and privacy of the areas.

The Urban Neighborhood component of the City's existing comprehensive plan states the purpose of these neighborhoods is:

"to provide residents the opportunity to choose among diverse housing options, ranging from low density single family properties to high density housing including apartments, Greek houses and cooperatives."

This statement recognizes that our urban neighborhoods are a principal place off-campus students live while attending classes at Michigan State University. These neighborhoods also serve others, not attending MSU, who want to live near the campus and the downtown City Center. It is the diversity of residents and housing options that give these neighborhoods their vitality and make them a very special place to live.

Our urban neighborhoods are not an unlimited resource. They are bounded in both physical space and the capacity of the infrastructure to house and otherwise adapt to a maximum number of residents. Preserving the integrity of the urban neighborhoods has been and will continue to be an important objective. To this end, City Council

formed the Task Force on Neighborhood Density in August 1992, charging this group with reviewing existing conditions and providing strategies and recommendations that will protect this valuable asset.

Urban Neighborhoods Defined

For this task force *urban neighborhoods* are those residential areas geographically surrounding the East Lansing downtown City Center and/or outlining the campus of Michigan State University. Specifically included are the Bailey, Brookfield, Central, Glencairn, Marble, Oakhill and Red Cedar neighborhoods. Policy statements and recommendations made about the urban neighborhoods may be appropriate to the other East Lansing neighborhoods as well.

Characteristically these neighborhoods include:

- a full range of residential zones and occupancy densities
- architecturally varied housing stock, much of it built over 50 years ago
- many properties with narrow lots, small yards and little green space
- many single family properties, most with single vehicle driveways and garages
- many apartment buildings and all of the City's co-ops and Greek houses
- maintenance and general appearance of most lawns and residential exteriors displaying great pride of ownership, yet other residences showing only minimal maintenance
- narrow streets with on-street parking generally limited to one side
- mature tree-lined streets, most with curbs and sidewalks
- many properties included within designated *historic districts*
- a diversity of residents in age, in occupation and in lifestyle
- some neighborhood conflicts due in part to differences in lifestyles
- residents who have lived in the same property for over fifty years, residents who remain only long enough to finish classes at MSU, and those in between

- residents with a strong sense of neighborhood and community, volunteering for a variety of City, campus, neighborhood and civic organizations
- a high usage of sidewalks providing convenient walking distances to:
 - the downtown City Center for shopping, dining and entertainment, etc.
 - Michigan State University for education, employment, recreation and cultural activities, etc.
 - neighborhood parks and schools
 - bus stops providing access to many points throughout the region
- noise and other pollution associated with overcrowding (people and cars)
- a large number of non-owner occupied residences, many of which are rented to groups of individuals attending Michigan State University
- some commercial (professional and retail) occupancies, particularly on main streets at neighborhood edges

Highlights of Our Interim Report

Our interim report, presented to City Council in February, 1993 identified some community perceptions regarding problems with our urban neighborhoods. In reviewing recent activities of the City, its staff, Council and boards and commissions, the task force concluded that the City:

- has tried to define and enforce a balance between accommodating housing choices and protecting urban neighborhood quality.
- has permitted diverse housing options throughout the neighborhoods, but has attempted to mitigate disruptive impacts through various regulations such as:
 - limiting occupancy to a level that best replicates family occupancy
 - strengthening the rental housing licensing system
 - enforcing noise and off-street parking provisions
- has identified the need to preserve the unique characteristics of the urban neighborhoods through adoption of the Historic District Ordinance and the workings of the Historic District Commission.

We found that there are serious concerns with the existing urban neighborhood conditions. City Council meetings and various commission meetings have seen a

significant amount of conflicting ideas from residents and property owners regarding a myriad of issues. The following represents some of the criticism.

- Some argue:
 - our current density limits are too restrictive
 - our *family definition* interferes with individual rights and relationships
 - our current occupancy limit for single family rentals is arbitrary, discriminatory and unenforceable
 - our noise and parking regulations are unreasonable

- Others argue:
 - our current density standards are too high and threaten neighborhoods with large-scale redevelopment and loss of property values
 - the extent and rate of rental conversions of single family properties should be reduced and perhaps, limited to certain targeted areas
 - we should intensify the strength and enforcement of our noise and parking restrictions

Both sides of these arguments can be logically supported. The challenge of the task force has been to analyze these arguments, identify common and consensus points where possible, and recommend solutions that will mitigate the negative perceptions each portrays. To begin this process, our interim report made the following observations:

- Several City ordinances are outdated:
 - the definition of family, particularly as it relates to recent Court rulings
 - the requirement that a rental property has as many parking places as it does licensed tenants
 - the RM-32 Zone, as a means to encourage large multiple residences

- Voluntary compliance, particularly with the new Housing Code and the Historic District Code, is much more desirable than solutions that require more enforcement. Solutions requiring extraordinary cost to taxpayers and/or staffing are unacceptable.

- Recommendations also need to provide a macro level plan for urban neighborhoods in terms of occupancy, parking, housing stock, etc., yet recognizing and protecting the rights of individual residents to govern their own lifestyle and property.

Summary of Findings

The strength of our urban neighborhoods lies in their ability to accommodate residential diversity. Residential diversity is achieved only when there exists an adequate quantity of quality housing stock and a balance of "owner occupied" and "rental" properties. Our urban neighborhoods are extremely fragile. Maintaining both the quality housing stock and the occupancy balance is the number one challenge these neighborhoods face.

Occupancy balance is very delicate. There is a point when too many "rental" properties may cause an exodus of "owner-occupied" residents, turning that area into an exclusively rental area. Because so many neighborhood observers perceive that there are many more conversions of property from "owner-occupied" to "rental" than the reverse, the task force looked at rates of conversions. We looked at both Census data and updated the City's own data. Census data does show some areas, Tracts 39.02, 40 and 43.01, in particular, with significant gains in the number of "rental occupied housing units" from the period 1970 to 1990. The number of "owner-occupied housing units" in these same tracts over the same period, however, remained constant. This suggests the gains in total number of rental units was due more to new development and redevelopment than it was conversions of existing owner-occupied structures. The City also has been tracking "conversions" over the past eight years. There are some sections of Bailey, particularly near the downtown, and less so in Central's Delta Triangle, where there still exists a net gain in new rentals. Most other areas of the City show no net gain of new rentals, and several neighborhoods report a net gain of "owner-occupied" conversions. **There is no wide scale conversion of "owner-occupied" properties to "rentals" over the past several years.** Some sections of Bailey and Central's Delta Triangle, however, are good examples of areas where the delicate balance has tipped to the point that they have become almost exclusively "rental." Some observers call these areas "student ghettos." The task force is emphatic that our urban neighborhoods need to maintain a balance, and avoid ghettos of any kind.

Current Trends in Population Density and Housing Uses

The key items we looked at were density, in particular population, the number of vehicles garaged in our neighborhoods and types and uses of housing stock. We wanted to understand if our neighborhoods were saturated with people and/or cars, what factors these density numbers play and what could be expected in the future.

U.S. Census data shows the City has experienced a modest 6.6%, (3,100) gain in total population from 1970 to 1990. Most of the population growth has occurred in the *northern tier* and through annexation. Population levels in urban neighborhoods have remained constant, even looking back to the 1960 U.S. Census. Some observers conclude that the stagnant population in our urban neighborhoods, where the demand

for housing has been consistently high, strongly suggests that these neighborhoods have reached their maximum population density.

Yet while the population between 1970 and 1990 remained unchanged, the number of "housing units" increased 28% (3,200) city wide. Taking a closer look, the *northern tier* has had the largest increase in rental housing units, while its number of owner-occupied units remained constant. Census Tract 41, which includes that part of Bailey near the City Center core, has experienced the largest drop in owner-occupied housing (39.2% decrease) and in renter-occupied units, (12.9% decrease). The principal loss of units in this area seems attributable to a change in use. Some rental units were lost to commercial redevelopment, and other nonresidential uses and many owner-occupied units have been converted to rentals.

Though we found no statistics to document the reasons for the significant loss of owner-occupied housing units in Tract 41, there are certain contributing factors. This neighborhood has some of the oldest housing stock and the largest percentage of rental housing stock in the City. This combination of use and age may be a deterrent for investment either as owner-occupied, and in some cases, as a profitable rental property. Also, the perception of many potential property owners is that the Historic District Ordinance, which covers most of this and other parts of the urban neighborhoods places undue restrictions on improvements. Another factor is that properties in these neighborhoods, maintain a high market value because of their potential for rental income. This high market value makes them unaffordable to low and moderate income persons, particularly young couples starting a career and a family. Many persons that might afford the down payment and a mortgage usually do not have money left for needed repairs.

Not Too Many People — Too Many Cars

As we looked at density issues, it quickly became apparent that the problem is too many vehicles, not too many people. Census data bears out this proposition. There has been a dramatic increase in the number of vehicles driven and parked in the urban neighborhoods. This increase in sheer numbers is aggravated by the fact that the urban infrastructure (e.g., street width, lot size and parking plans) was not designed to accommodate anything remotely approaching the present vehicle density. Many factors have combined to cause this change, including:

- **Changing demographics:** Areas near campus are changing from predominantly traditional single-family neighborhoods to more mixed neighborhoods with some single family and some rental properties. The urban neighborhoods, because of their proximity to MSU, are attractive places for persons attending MSU to live off campus.

- **Changing lifestyles:** More often traditional families have multiple vehicles; also persons attending MSU more frequently own or have access to vehicles. One MSU official reported that MSU estimates 85% of their students, (approximately 34,000) have a car stored either on campus or somewhere in the City. In addition, each day many people from outlining communities drive to and from MSU for school and work. Some use the campus parking lots, but many park in City parking lots and structures and on our urban neighborhood streets.
- **Public policy:** The City of East Lansing has facilitated higher vehicle density through parking space requirements at rental properties. Simultaneously, MSU significantly restricts on-campus parking, particularly for students.

Vacancy and Over-occupancy at the Same Time

U.S. Census data shows an approximate 50% city-wide increase in vacant housing units over the 1970 to 1990 period. Compounding this, over the past four years demand for rental housing has taken an additional decrease, due largely to the drop in MSU student enrollment and an undocumented, though noted trend for students opting for less expensive housing outside East Lansing City limits. This data suggests the City currently has a surplus of housing units available. Property owners and Housing officials confirm this. They estimated that in the 1992-93 school year that the vacancy rate in rental properties was as high as 15% to 20%. The estimates are not as high in the current year, perhaps in the 10% to 15% range. Property owners contacted indicate that this is due to market stabilizing and rent reductions. The exact number is not as important as noting there is a significant vacancy rate. Vacant property presents problems. Of major concern is that once a property is out of an income producing stream, property owners may be forced to put off routine repair and maintenance.

At the same time we have a surplus of rental property, there exists significant over-occupancy in rented properties. Over-occupancy occurs where owners and/or tenants allow more persons to occupy a dwelling than permitted by zoning and housing codes. Even in the face of stiff fines for violations, it is nearly impossible to convince most tenants and many rental property owners to limit the number of occupants to the code requirement. Though we did not derive specific numbers, nearly every person, particularly those living in rental housing, who talked with task force members, reported there are more people living at their house than that residence is licensed to house. Although the perception in the community is that over-occupancy is the norm, the City's latest housing survey suggests the frequency of over-occupancy in our urban neighborhood areas is approximately 38%, still a significant number. Often, people expressed concern that health and safety issues are being compromised.

The reasons for over-occupancy are many. The perception that rents are too high, particularly on properties where in order for the owners to realize a reasonable rate of return they are forced to charge more than the traditional rental formula. Often rents are set by taking the number of licensed residents times the average monthly rental rate per person in that area. As an example, say a property owner has to rent a property for \$1,250 a month and the property is licensed for a maximum of four persons. If the average market rental rate, i.e., what most units in the area rent for, is \$250 a month, then this example property will have at least five persons living in it. Aggravating the situation is the large number of rental properties that can easily house more occupants than the Zoning Code allows. Tenants are given an irresistible temptation to find additional persons to share unused space and expenses. They simply do not understand or respect the City's ordinances. Over-occupancy enforcement requires considerable City staff time and expense and creates a generally hostile situation between property owners, tenants and the City. Our Housing staff does not currently work at night, the most effective time to identify over-occupancy.

Declining MSU Enrollment Playing a Significant Part

By and large, rental property demand in the urban neighborhoods is directly related to MSU enrollment, and in particular undergraduate enrollment. The Housing staff suggested that graduate students often live further from campus, and in particular do not want to live in areas where high numbers of undergraduates live.

High rental property vacancies are not surprising given MSU's recent enrollment trends. MSU's total enrollment has dropped from a high of 42,866 in 1989 to a current year enrollment of just under 40,000, a drop of almost 3,000 total students. Undergraduate enrollment showed the largest decrease with a drop of over 3,500 students. Both graduate and graduate professional enrollment in that period showed modest to significant increases.

In reviewing future enrollment, MSU representatives say they want to continue to aim at a total enrollment of 40,000, roughly where they are now. They further indicated that they are trying to increase the mix of graduates to undergraduates over their planning period from approximately 19% to a goal of 25%. With total enrollment projections remaining constant, the increase in graduate students will be accomplished by an equal, approximately 2,000, decrease in undergraduates. Other factors are also coming into play.

Not unlike our urban neighborhoods, on-campus housing is underutilized. As reported by The State Journal last winter term, MSU was "3,000 students shy of its 17,000 capacity rate last reached in 1989." Our discussions with MSU verified that they are looking at how to better market their on-campus housing, regaining maximum occupancy levels. Indications are that MSU plans to maintain its existing number of

on-campus residents and has no plans to build additional housing. There is an active committee looking at alternatives. As a potential solution, MSU could require certain students to live on campus. Although having some logic, MSU does not appear receptive to changing their historical position of not providing on-campus housing options to accommodate group and multiple housing options such as cooperatives, Greeks and other fraternal organizations.

Given these trends, it can be easily argued that over the next few years the demand for student housing by undergraduates will continue to decrease. The potential of 3,000 to 5,000 fewer persons seeking a place to live in our urban neighborhoods is a distinct possibility.

Many Rental Properties Are Changing Ownership

With the changing economics of rental property ownership, it is not surprising that many properties are being sold. The Housing Office reports three particular trends are apparent. First, there are several property owners making extensive new acquisitions. One property owner went from owning 33 properties to owning 57 properties from June, 1992 to June, 1993, and may be continuing to accumulate properties. Other property owners are making large scale purchases as well, with two known instances of out-of-state investment consortiums buying large parcels of properties. The second trend seen is the trading of properties among property owners. Usually the result is each property owner ends up with contiguous properties, i.e., assemblage of adjacent properties. A third trend is the number of parents, not living in the area, buying homes for their sons and daughters to live here while attending MSU. While local property owners generally understand local policies and regulations and have pride in their community, the significant ownership of properties by people not living in the area is cause for concern.

Opportunities and Challenges

The above outlines the status of our urban neighborhoods as we explored our City Council charge. To preserve our urban neighborhoods, we face both challenges and opportunities, including:

- Attracting residents that are not attending class at MSU
- Maintaining housing stock that might sit empty for long periods
- Dealing with an increasing number of cars
- Finding alternate uses for our housing stock

- Helping "neighbor to neighbor" relationships
- Enhancing Housing and Zoning Code enforcement without significantly increasing staff or expenses

Following are our specific recommendations. Their sequence is not a statement of priority. Many recommendations are not new. Several are already assigned to various boards and commissions. We hope our support will refocus the community on the need for an expeditious resolution. This, along with the community's desire to see change, as witnessed by the recent City Council election, presents all of us with a real window of opportunity.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. *Revise the Zoning Code's "Family Definition":*

The City's Zoning Code's definition of family needs to be revised to incorporate "functional families" per the Michigan Supreme Court ruling in the case entitled *Delta Township vs. Dinolfo*. Here the Supreme Court found the Delta Township zoning ordinance to be discriminatory because it did not provide for the functional equivalent of a family to occupy a single family home. The definition of family is important because largely, housing density within a *traditional family unit*, i.e., husband, wife and children, may not be regulated. This protection for the *traditional family unit* has both legal and historical roots. The question of what "group of individuals" is a family for zoning and housing is an integral element in maintaining density balance in our urban neighborhoods. Given the Dinolfo decision, municipalities, including East Lansing, are on notice by the Court that their zoning and housing codes dealing with *family* (i.e., how many *unrelated individuals* may reside in a given structure) may be discriminatory and thus unenforceable. The Court strongly recommends municipalities adopt a broader *functional family unit* definition.

(Note: This recommendation should not be interpreted as a response to the recently passed "Charter Amendment." Although we discussed potential impacts of the amendment, i.e., "what if's," neither this recommendation nor this report deals specifically with the Charter Amendment, which we conclude is a separate issue.)

The task force supports the earlier recommendation of the Planning Commission as outlined in a January 16, 1992 memorandum from Brad Pryce. However, we recommend a slight variation in the wording that we understand was taken principally from the Court's suggestion. We recommend the following definition of family be expeditiously incorporated within the Zoning Ordinance: (Responsibility - City Council)

FAMILY: Family shall mean:

- (a) *One person, two persons, or where there are more than two persons residing in a dwelling unit, persons classified constituting a family shall be limited to husband, wife, son, daughter, father, mother, brother, sister, grandfather, grandmother, grandson, granddaughter, aunt, uncle, stepchildren, and legally adopted children or any combination of the above persons living together in a single dwelling unit.*

- (b) *A collective number of individuals living together in one dwelling or unit whose relationship is of a regular, long term, continuing and distinct domestic character or bond where each party is responsible for the basic material needs of the other and all are living and cooking as a single housekeeping unit.*

This definition shall not include any society, club, fraternity, sorority, association, lodge, combine, federation, group, coterie, or organization which is not a recognized religious order, nor include a group of individuals whose association is temporary or seasonal in character or nature.

2. *Review and Revise All Urban Neighborhood "Zoning Districts"*

Preserving the integrity of our existing urban neighborhoods must be a #1 priority. Some areas of our urban neighborhoods have, and others are becoming, overcrowded with both people and cars. Residents in these areas find levels of noise and problems associated with residential traffic congestion offensive. Often residents' health and safety are at risk. Reducing density in those areas that are overcrowded and ensuring that areas threatened by overcrowding are protected is critical in maintaining the vitality and economic value of these neighborhoods.

Zoning (i.e., urban planning) was initially established in these urban areas between the mid 30's and the early 50's, and has remained virtually unchanged over the last 40-50 years. As initially conceived these zoning laws were set up with a focus on "new development" within these neighborhoods. At their inception and throughout the development of these neighborhoods, the number of cars per dwelling unit was anticipated to be 1.0 or less. Some of our zones, specifically the RM-32 zone, were set up to accommodate the significant growth anticipated at MSU following World War II. These RM-32 areas were designed as places where it was desirable to build "multiple dwelling" type structures.

The situation today is significantly different from the scenario following World War II. The urban neighborhoods are now fully developed, i.e., there are not any significant pieces of vacant land. Any significant development in these neighborhoods is in actuality redevelopment. This outdated "new development" zoning concept suggests that any redevelopment requires demolition of existing structures. Conflict arises as these urban neighborhood residents resist demolition required for large scale redevelopments. Development alternatives other than "knock it down and start from scratch" must be considered. Developed neighborhoods, wanting to maintain their integrity, will be much more receptive if "creative uses" of existing structures are proposed.

There is no shortage of available housing in these neighborhoods, nor is there any evidence suggesting there could be. Our urban neighborhoods have a good mix of housing stock, particularly in terms of available properties for owners to occupy, for property owners to invest, and for short term residents to live in.

Currently these neighborhoods are principally zoned within one of four districts: the R-1 and R-2 — Single Family Districts, the R-3 — Single and Two Family District and the RM-32 City Center Multiple Family District. Many residential properties in these neighborhoods also lie within a Historic District.

The current RM-32 zone is not developed to its maximum permitted density. Many sections of our urban neighborhoods are zoned to house significantly more residents than the structures that are presently there can accommodate, giving the false impression that the urban neighborhoods have the capacity to house that maximum number of people. RM-32 property owners contemplating a more intense development find a multitude of ordinances, such as setbacks, parking requirements, ground coverage maximums, etc. that make the redevelopment impractical, if not impossible. In certain situations and areas, the RM-32 zone has outlived its usefulness and is now a source of neighborhood conflict.

In recent years almost every plan for redevelopment has met strong neighborhood opposition as neighbors feel their health and safety threatened by the anticipation of more people and more cars in an area they believe is already saturated. This is particularly true on neighborhood and zoning edges.

Given this, we recommend all zones within the urban neighborhoods be reviewed and revised to focus on "maintaining existing neighborhood integrity and diversity." This includes a plan to:

- maintain reasonable population density at or near existing levels.
- control the number of vehicles and traffic at a safe and reasonable level consistent with a zone's density.
- encourage the increase of "greenspace" by reducing the amount of ground that can be covered with a structure and parking surfaces.
- specifically recognize and accommodate the need to "redevelop" appropriate sites and/or areas.
- discourage residential areas from becoming void of owner-occupied dwellings.
- provide for enforceability without significantly adding to staff or taxpayer cost.

The task force, particularly our subcommittee assigned to look at zoning, spent considerable time on this issue, including walking tours of the neighborhoods. Given the time constraints, they stopped short of a specific recommended zone resolution, i.e., a revised zoning map. They did establish however a set of specific recommendations that can guide the Planning Commission in completing this task.

a. *Revise the Existing RM-32 Zone*

- reduce the extent of areas now zoned RM-32
- permit redevelopment consistent with Historic District guidelines for streetscape, etc., but allowing for demolition.

b. *Design a New "Medium Density Multiple Family District" that includes:*

- density maximums lower than RM-32.
- maximum building heights lower than RM-32.
- minimum setbacks and lot coverage restrictions greater than RM-32, defined to discourage "additions" that would increase density potential, except with a special use permit.
- limit conversion of "traditional" common space into sleeping rooms. This includes kitchens, living rooms, dining rooms and bathrooms.

In both of these zones set standards that:

- permit occupancy limits based on building *carrying capacity*
- allow reduced parking requirements that are tradeoffs for greenspace.
- restrict maximum building heights on structures built on zone edges to be consistent with properties in the adjacent less dense zone.
- encourage the creative use of existing structures in any redevelopment, particularly single family type structures, including "in-filling," etc.

c. *Revise the Existing R-3, R-2 and R-1 Zones*

- require greater limits on ground coverage to restrict parking area expansion
- reduce the number of parking spaces required per person
- limit conversion of "traditional" common space into sleeping rooms. This includes kitchens, living rooms, dining rooms and bathrooms.

In all of the revised zones set standards that:

- revise the "three-foot setback from a property line" requirement to allow a lesser setback if other actions, such as curbing or screening, are taken to prevent encroachment onto neighboring properties.