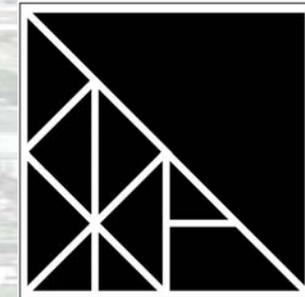


Dorchester Avenue

# Signage and Permitting Workshop

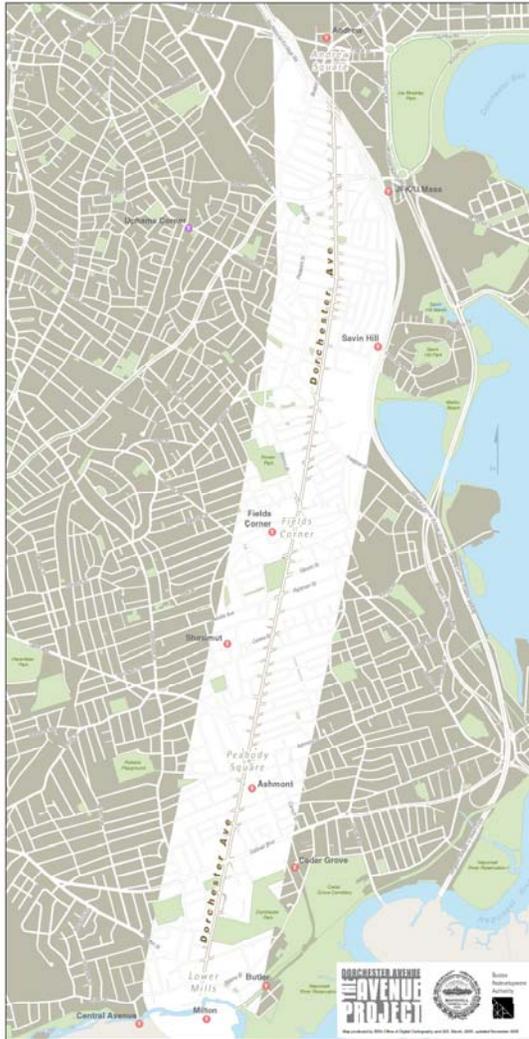


DORCHESTER AVENUE  
THE AVENUE  
PROJECT



April 25<sup>th</sup>, 27<sup>th</sup>, & May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2006

# Dorchester Avenue Project Overview



- The Dorchester Avenue Project stretches almost 4 miles, from Interstate 93/Dot Ave to Lower Mills
- Focusing on issues regarding transportation, businesses, housing, and streetscapes
- Mayor Menino kicked off the initiative in March 2005
- Since Spring 2005, the Avenue Project has involved:
  - *Community Charrettes*
  - *Business Workshops*
  - *Youth Summit*
  - *Developing an Action Plan*
  - *Developing a Business Trend Analysis*



# Dorchester Avenue Today: *Examples of Storefronts and Signage*



# Dorchester Avenue Today: *Examples of Storefronts and Signage*



# Dorchester Avenue Signage Design

Carol McLaughlin, DND

- ReStore Program
- Boston Main Streets Program
- City Resources

The Department of Neighborhood Development, through it's Office of Business Development offers programs to help small business owners



# Dorchester Avenue Signage Design

## ReStore-*Overview*

- ReStore is a façade improvement program designed to assist small businesses and small property owners in making capital improvements to their commercial storefronts in Boston's neighborhoods.
- ReStore can provide matching loans and grants, with a maximum match of **\$7,500** per storefront.

Before



After



Roslindale



# Dorchester Avenue Signage Design

## ReStore-*Examples*



Roxbury



Dorchester Avenue Signage and Permitting Workshop

April 25, 27, & May 2, 2006

# Dorchester Avenue Signage Design

## ReStore-*Examples*



Before



After

Dorchester



# Dorchester Avenue Signage Design

## The Boston Main Streets Program-*Overview*

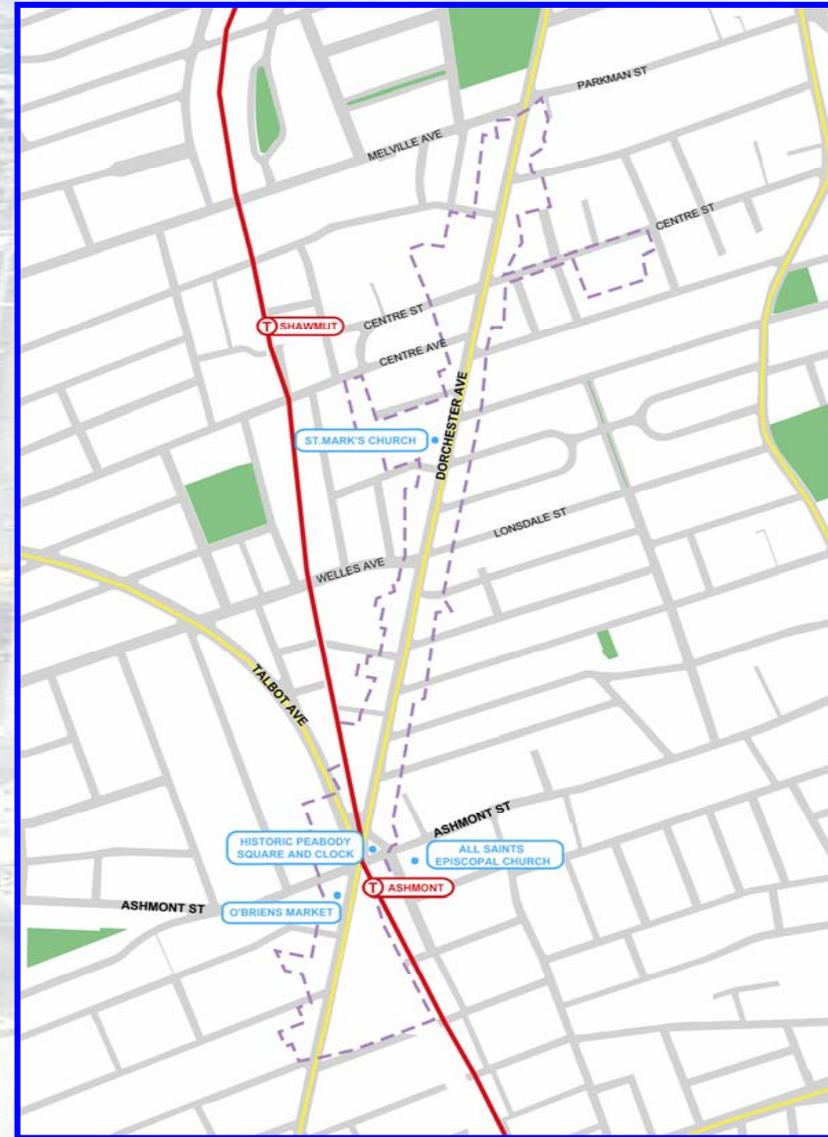
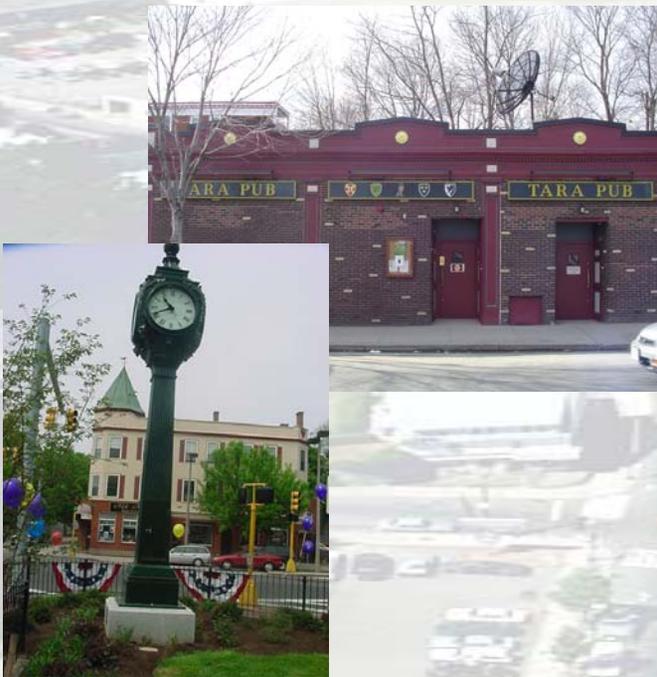
- Seeks to enrich the unique character of each part of the city
- Offers a Storefront Improvement Program to assist in improving design and physical appearance of buildings
- Provides a matching grant program with a maximum grant of up to \$5,000 per single storefront and up to \$10,000 for a building with multiple storefronts.
- There are 2 of 19 Main Streets districts in Boston on Dorchester Avenue
  - St. Mark's Area Main Streets
  - Fields Corner Main Streets



# Dorchester Avenue Signage Design

## St. Mark's Area Main Streets

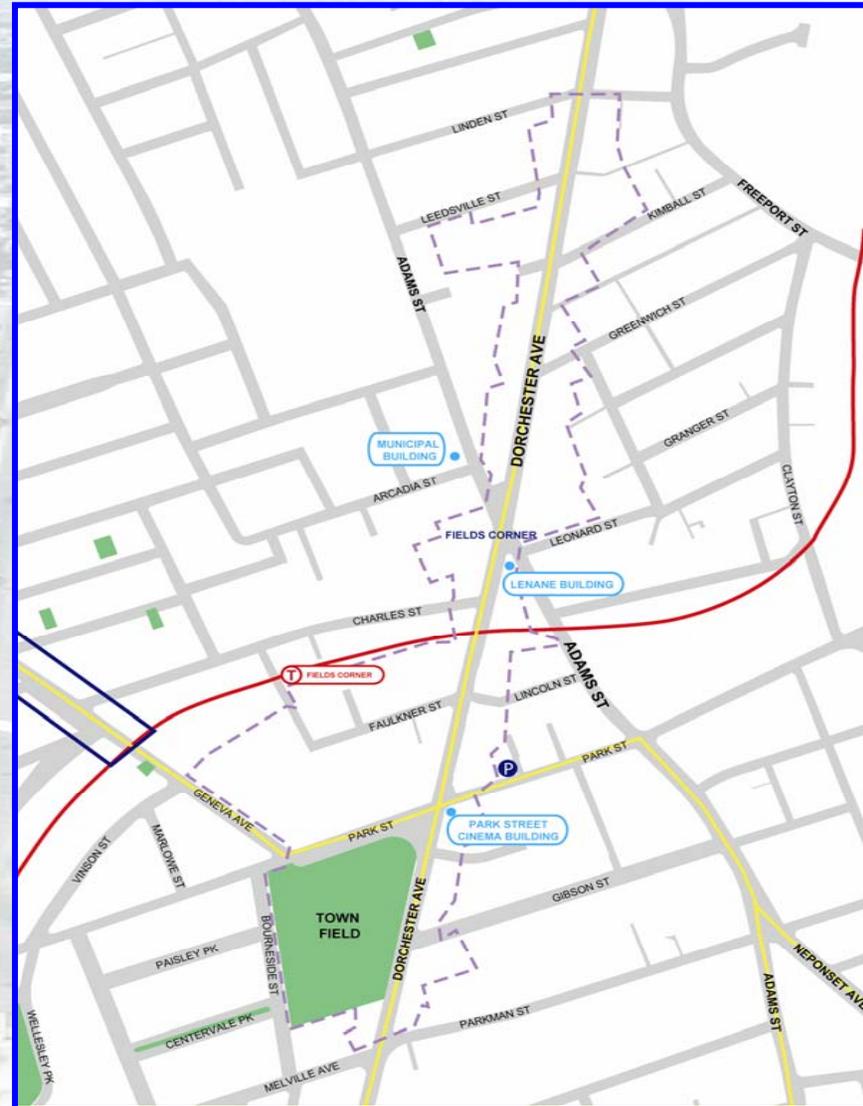
Dorchester Avenue from  
Melville Avenue to Mercier Street



# Dorchester Avenue Signage Design

## Fields Corner Main Streets

Dorchester Avenue from  
Melville Avenue to  
Freeport Street and East Street



# Dorchester Avenue Signage Design

## Boston Main Streets Design Guidelines

The Boston Main Streets Design Guidelines encourage good design by addressing issues that business and property owners face in planning commercial and retail improvements.



ALLSTON | HYDE PARK | MISSION HILL | ROSLINDALE VILLAGE  
ROXBURY | BOWDOIN-GENEVA | BRIGHTON | CHINATOWN | CODMAN SQUARE  
ROBEY SQUARE | GROVE HALL | HYDE-JACKSON | CENTRE-SOUTH | WEST ROXBURY  
CORNER | WASHINGTON GATEWAY | ALLSTON VILLAGE | BOWDOIN  
ROXBURY SQUARE | FIELDS CORNER | FOUR CORNERS | GROVE HALL  
ROSLINDALE VILLAGE | ST. MARKS | SOUTH BOSTON | UPHAM SQUARE  
CHINATOWN | CODMAN SQUARE | DUDLEY SQUARE | DUDLEY SQUARE  
HYDE-JACKSON | CENTRE-SOUTH | WEST ROXBURY | HYDE PARK  
ALLSTON VILLAGE  
FOUR CORNERS  
BOSTON | UPHAM'S  
CORNER | EAST BOSTON  
MISSION HILL |  
ROXBURY | BRIGHTON |  
CORNER | GROVE HALL  
UPHAM'S CORNER |



# Dorchester Avenue Signage Design

Design is used to attract new clients to a new business.  
Allston Village Main Streets



Before



After



# Dorchester Avenue Signage Design

## St. Marks Area Main Streets

Before



After



# Dorchester Avenue Signage Design

## Chinatown Main Streets



Before



After



# Dorchester Avenue Signage Design

## Allston Village Main Streets



Before



After



# Dorchester Avenue Signage Design

## West Roxbury Main Streets

After



Before



Dorchester Avenue Signage and Permitting Workshop

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# Dorchester Avenue Signage Design

## Washington Gateway Main Streets



Before



After



# Dorchester Avenue Signage Design

## ReStore & Main Streets-*Further Information*

- ReStore Boston funds and Boston Main Streets funds are to be utilized for ***exterior work only***, including but not limited to: Windows, doors, exterior lighting, and signage.
- All projects funded by these programs require City of Boston review and approval prior to any construction. Projects are required to removed solid roll-down grates.

For additional information and applications contact:

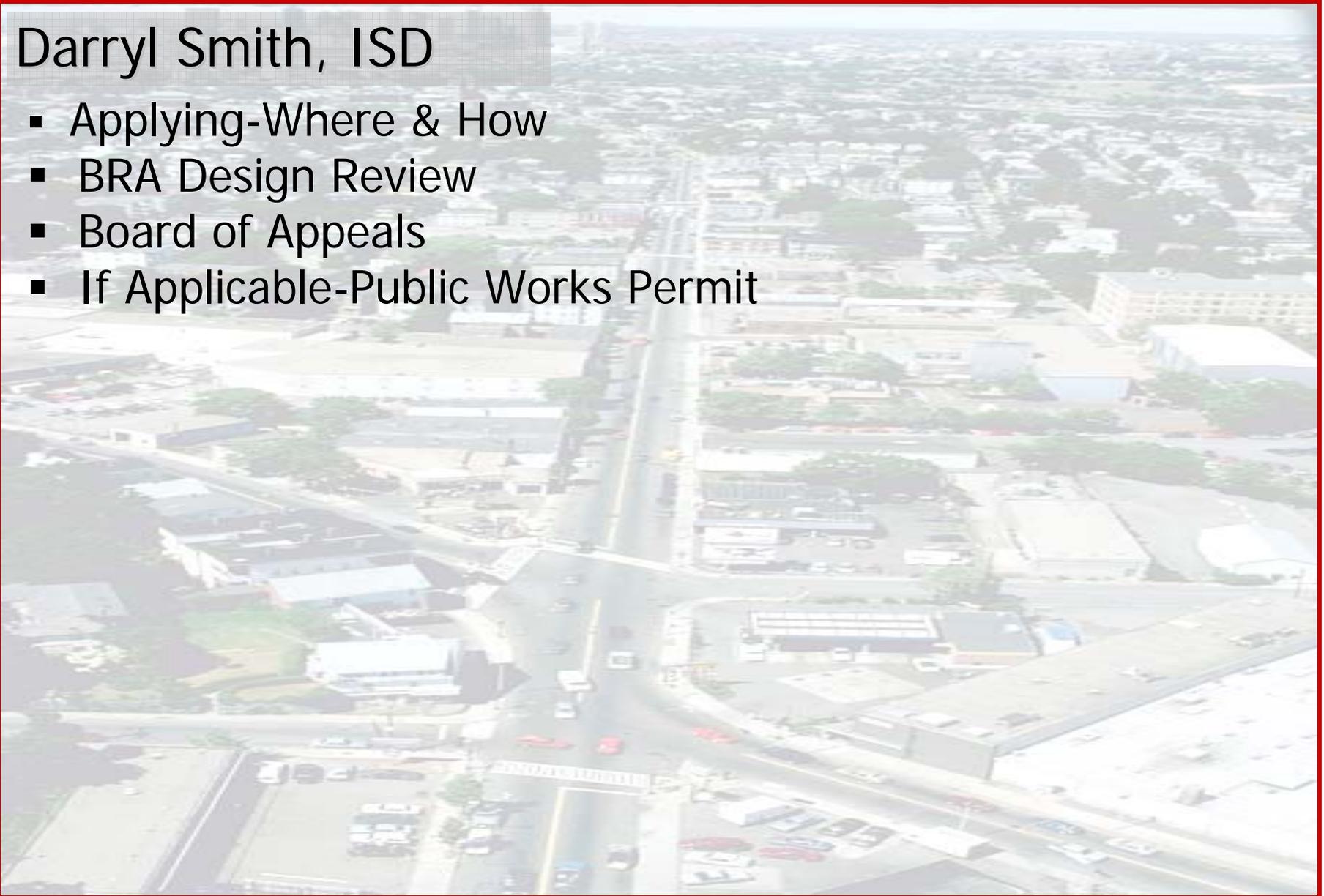
- St. Mark's Area Main Streets, Executive Director Dan Larner, 617-825-3846
- Fields Corner Main Streets, Executive Director Evelyn Darling, 617-474-1432
- ReStore Boston, Senior Project Manager Aaron Schleifer, 617-635-0290



# Boston Signage Permitting Process

## Darryl Smith, ISD

- Applying-Where & How
- BRA Design Review
- Board of Appeals
- If Applicable-Public Works Permit



**DORCHESTER AVENUE  
PROJECT**



Dorchester Avenue Signage and Permitting Workshop

*April 25, 27, & May 2, 2006*

# Boston Signage Permitting Process

## How to Obtain a Sign Permit - *Apply*

### STEP 1:

- Apply for a permit by filling out an application at ISD, 1010 Massachusetts Ave, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, Counter 1, Boston
- Submit two copies of drawings showing dimensions of the sign, materials, and how it will be affixed
- Permit is \$7 dollars / per \$1000 toward cost of sign



### STEP 2:

- Permit will be reviewed
- If the sign meets all of the zoning regulations, it will be approved and you will be able to pick up the permit for the installation of the sign. ISD will send a letter of approval notification.
- If the application is rejected, you have two options...



# Boston Signage Permitting Process

## How to Obtain a Sign Permit - *Review*

### OPTION A: BRA Sign Design Review

- Contact Michael Cannizzo, Urban Designer / BRA, to schedule a design review meeting with a BRA Urban Designer

- Once reviewed, the staff person will either approve or suggest changes to be incorporated before a BRA approval is granted

- Upon approval, the applicant needs to take the approved drawings to ISD

- ISD will then decide whether additional information is needed before issuing a sign permit



# Boston Signage Permitting Process

## How to Obtain a Sign Permit - *Appeals*

### OPTION B: Zoning Board of Appeal

- Apply for an appeal by obtaining an appeal form at ISD, 1010 Massachusetts Avenue, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, Counter 1.

↓

- Once submitted, you will receive a letter in the mail with a date for your Zoning Board of Appeal hearing, held in Room 801, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor of Boston City Hall

↓

- At the ZBA hearing, your appeal for your sign will either be approved, denied, or deferred to a later hearing.

↓

- Upon approval, you will then work with a member of the BRA's Urban Design staff who will review the design of the sign and follow the process laid out in OPTION A:



# Boston Signage Permitting Process

## Public Works Department (PWD) Permit

- All signs and canopies that extend more than 6 inches over a public sidewalk or road requires a permit from the PWD



- Sandwich Boards are NOT allowed on public property in the Dorchester Avenue District

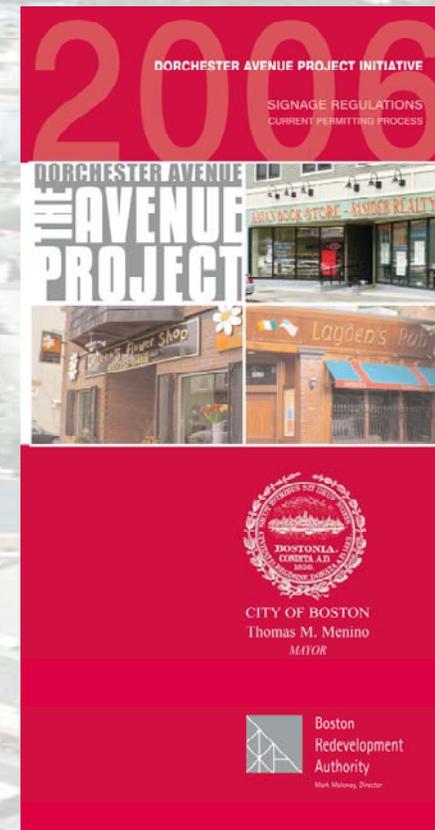
- Applications are available online or can be picked up at PWD, Room 714, 7<sup>th</sup> Floor, City Hall



# Dorchester Avenue Sign Regulations

Jim Fitzgerald, BRA

1. Overview & Examples of 2 sign types
  - Permanent Signs
  - Temporary Signs
2. Highlights of regulations in Boston Zoning
  - Article 11 – main sign code
  - Article 52 – Dorchester Avenue Code
    - provides additional Avenue specific sign regulations under Section 52-24



# Dorchester Avenue Sign Regulations

## Examples of Permanent Signs

Attached Flat Signs

Sign Painted Directly on a building

Banner

Canopy

Awning

Blade Sign

Interior Window Sign

Flag w/ logo or advertisement



# Dorchester Avenue Sign Regulations

## Examples of Temporary Signs – Permits Required

Flag w/ logo or advertisement

Banner

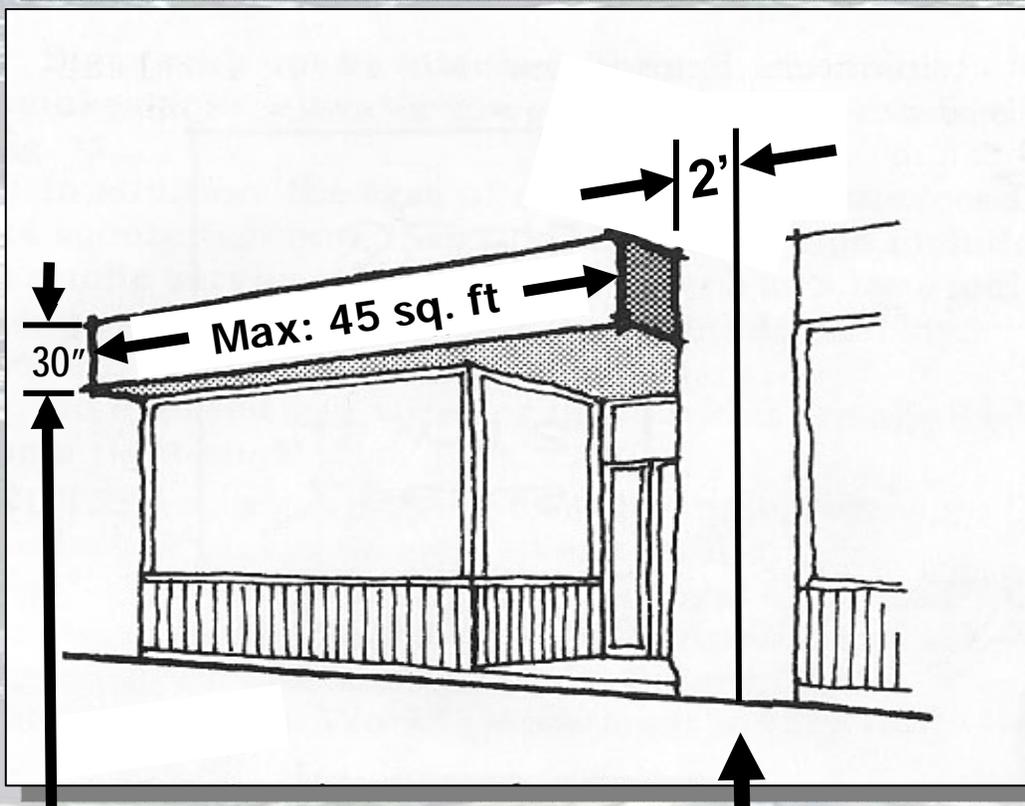
Interior Window Sign

- No permit is required if the sign covers less than 30% of the window and is for a special sale or event



# Dorchester Avenue Sign Regulations

## Wall Signs-*Dimensions*



**Total Sign Area** shall not exceed the Sign Frontage x 2 or 45 sq. ft.

**Sign Frontage** is the width of the ground floor level of a building front, or the width that is occupied by an individual business facing a street.

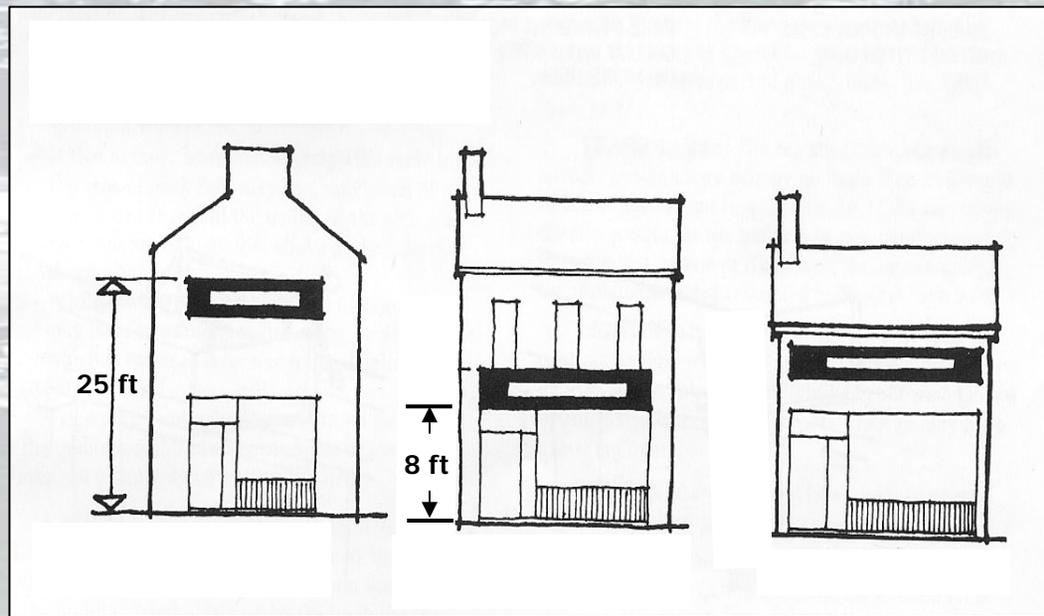
Can project **No more than 15 inches** from the building surface

**Cannot exceed 30 inches** from top to bottom

Signage **must be 2 ft.** from edge of building wall/frontage

# Dorchester Avenue Sign Regulations

## Wall Signs-*Locations*



Cannot be attached to roofs, chimneys, smoke stacks, elevator towers or penthouses

**Min. Height:** 8 feet above grade

**Max Height:** Sign may not be higher than the lowest of the following:

Lowest point of roof

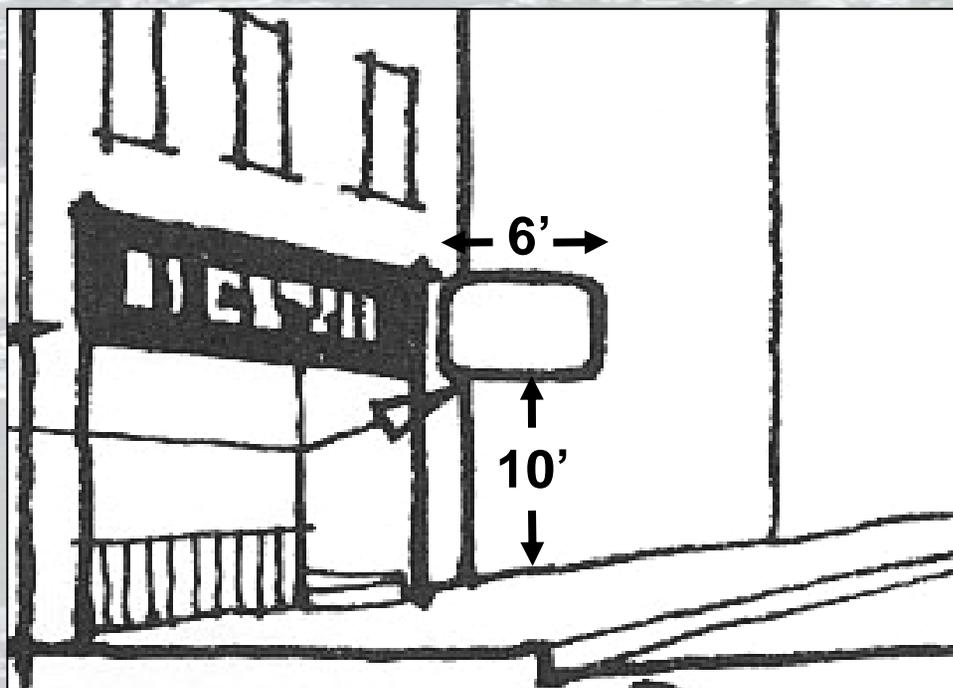
Sills of windows on second story

25 feet above sidewalk



# Dorchester Avenue Sign Regulations

## Right Angle Signs-*Dimensions & Locations*



**Right Angle Sign Area** shall not exceed 4 sq. feet on either face.

The bottom of the sign must be at least 10 feet above ground level

Can have a maximum of two faces

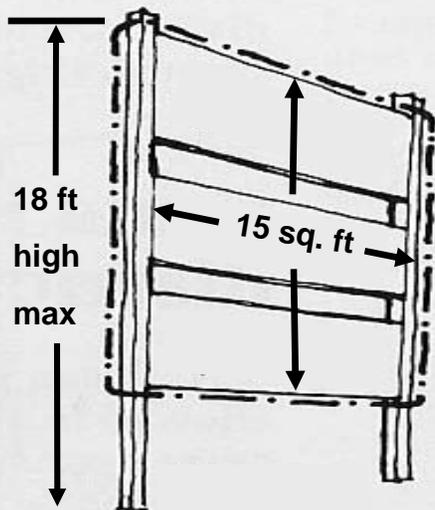
Each entrance to a business is allowed one right-angle sign

The business that has the sign must occupy at least 18 feet of frontage

Can project a max. of 6 ft. from the building

# Dorchester Avenue Sign Regulations

## *Free Standing Signs*



Bottom of sign: No higher than 10 ft., but no lower than 8 ft. above ground level

### ***Allowed for:***

- a.) Uses located in a Community Commercial District
- b.) Gasoline Stations

One free standing sign on a lot

Sign area of no more than 15 sq. ft.

Top of sign cannot exceed 18 feet above ground

# Dorchester Avenue Sign Regulations

## *Window Displays*



### Display Window Area Transparency

- For Retail, Restaurant, Service, or Trade Use, at least **60%** of the window shall be transparent.
- Office and Entertainment Uses, at least **50%** of the window shall be transparent.
- Industrial and Vehicular Uses, at least **50%** of the window shall be transparent.



DORCHESTER AVENUE  
PROJECT



## Next Steps

- In the upcoming months, ISD will be strictly ***enforcing*** the existing Boston sign code.
- The BRA will be coordinating with ISD, city agencies, and civic organizations on Dorchester Avenue to develop a plan of enforcement.
- The enforcement piece will look at such signage issues as:
  - Broken Signage
  - Excessive Window Clutter
  - Temporary Banners
- Health issues will also be explored (pigeon nesting, etc.)

