



October 22, 2025

# NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSING ZONING AND HYDE PARK ANALYSIS

Hyde Park Boston Centers for Youth and Families  
6:00p-7:30p



# MEET THE TEAM

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**Kathleen Onufer**  
Deputy Director of Zoning Reform



**Will Cohen (Presenter)**  
Senior Planner II



**Jein Park (Presenter)**  
Planner I



**Lorraine Kung**  
Urban Designer II



**Yi Ming Wu**  
Urban Designer I



**Kenya Beaman**  
Community Engagement Manager



**Ilana Haimes**  
Planner II  
Hyde Park Neighborhood Planner



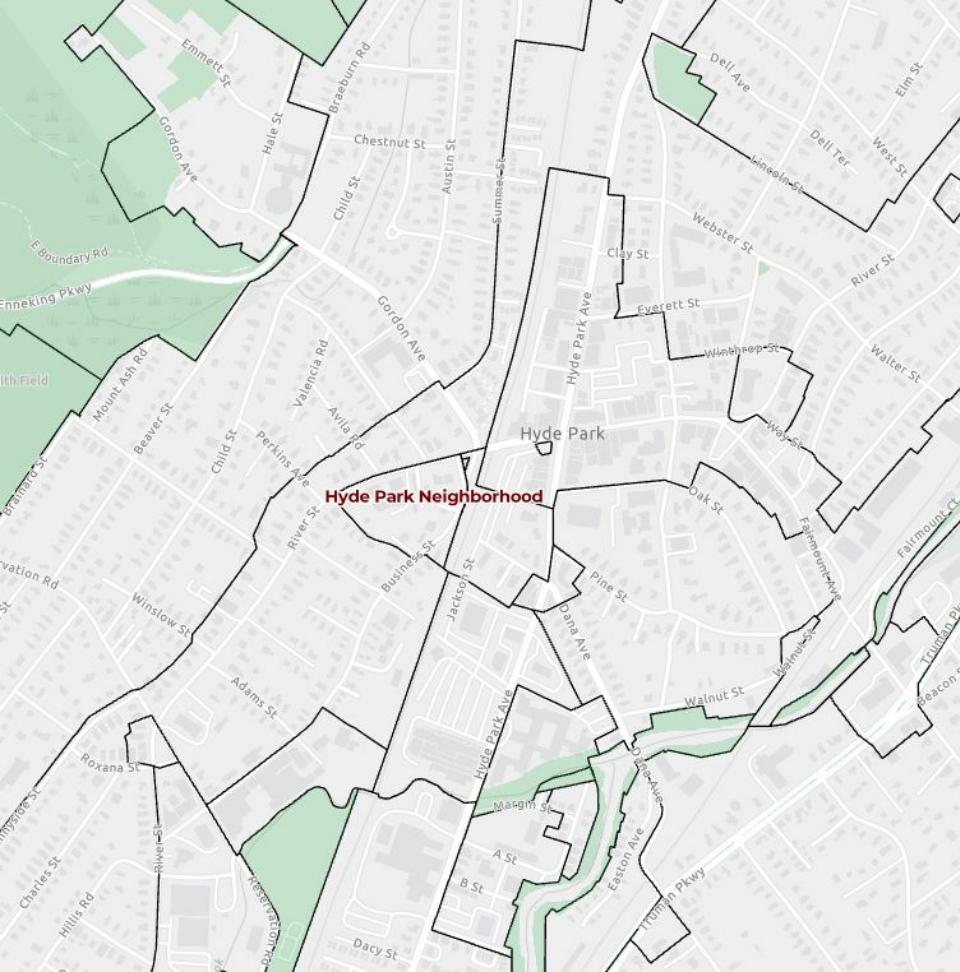
**Zoë Petty**  
Hyde Park Neighborhood Liaison

# AGENDA

1. What is Zoning?
2. Existing Conditions in Hyde Park
3. Mattapan: What has happened since new zoning?
4. Q&A and Discussion



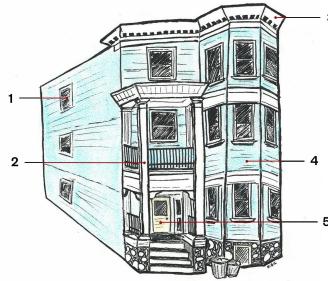
# WHAT IS ZONING?



# ZONING TELLS US HOW OUR CITY SHOULD LOOK.



Zoning is a set of local laws that guide how land and buildings can be used and shaped. In residential areas, zoning determines things like **how many homes or units** can be built on a lot, **how tall or large those homes can be**, and **how much open space and parking must be provided**. Some of what zoning regulates includes:



## LAND USES

the types of activities allowed within a given area (ex: what types and how many homes are allowed)

## BUILDING DIMENSIONS

how much space a building takes up, its height, and the open space around it

## OTHER REGULATIONS

parking and driveway requirements, porches or decks, entrances, etc

Zoning doesn't build or demolish anything; it acts as guides and limits to what people *can* build.

# ZONING DISTRICTS GET PLACED ON A MAP.



- Zoning maps divide and organize land in a city into zoning districts
- Zoning districts determine the **use** of land, **shape** of buildings on land, and **density** of buildings on land
- The same districts can be **used in similar areas throughout the city**. This makes updates to zoning easier and more equitable.



A snapshot of Hyde Park's zoning districts that include portions of commercial, mixed-use, and residential subdistricts.

# WHAT IS SQUARES + STREETS?

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Squares + Streets is a city wide planning and zoning initiative that focuses on housing, public space, arts and culture, and transit in neighborhood centers and along main streets.

- There is an ongoing Small Area plan in Hyde Park in Cleary Square.
- Rezoning in the commercial areas in Cleary Square will happen through Squares + Streets.
- The Planning Department is working on an amendment to the S+S districts. Get involved at [bostonplans.org/zoning4squares](http://bostonplans.org/zoning4squares).
- The Cleary Square planning process will pick back up early next year. Events will be on the Hyde Park email list and [bostonplans.org/cleary-square](http://bostonplans.org/cleary-square)



# WHAT IS RESIDENTIAL ZONING?

Most existing homes in Boston don't comply with current zoning. Making changes to one's home - whether a small renovation or adding an ADU - often requires a costly, time-consuming variance process.

The Neighborhood Housing Initiative will modernize residential zoning for:

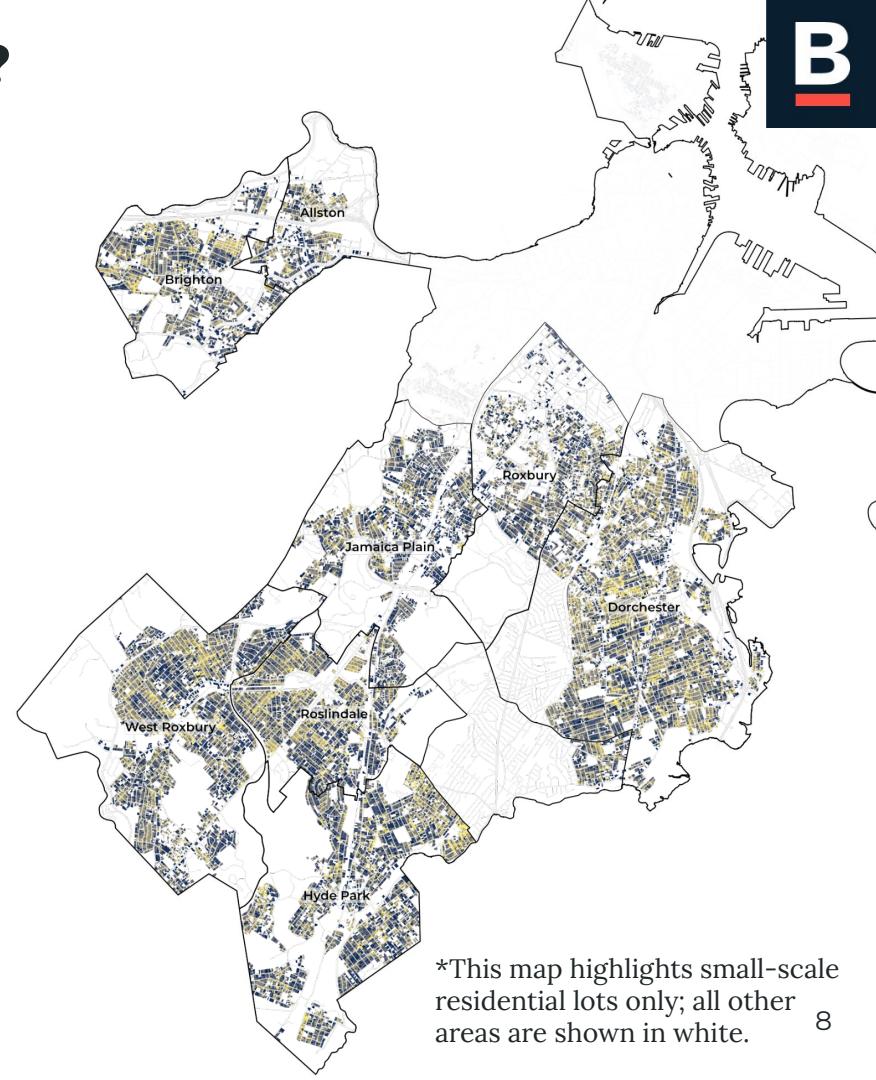
- Clear, predictable rules that reflect how neighborhoods look today
- First phase focuses on Roslindale, West Roxbury, and Hyde Park, building on work done in Mattapan



Non-compliant with at least one zoning requirement



Non-compliant with at least six zoning requirements



\*This map highlights small-scale residential lots only; all other areas are shown in white.

# WHAT'S NOT WORKING WITH HYDE PARK'S CURRENT RESIDENTIAL ZONING?

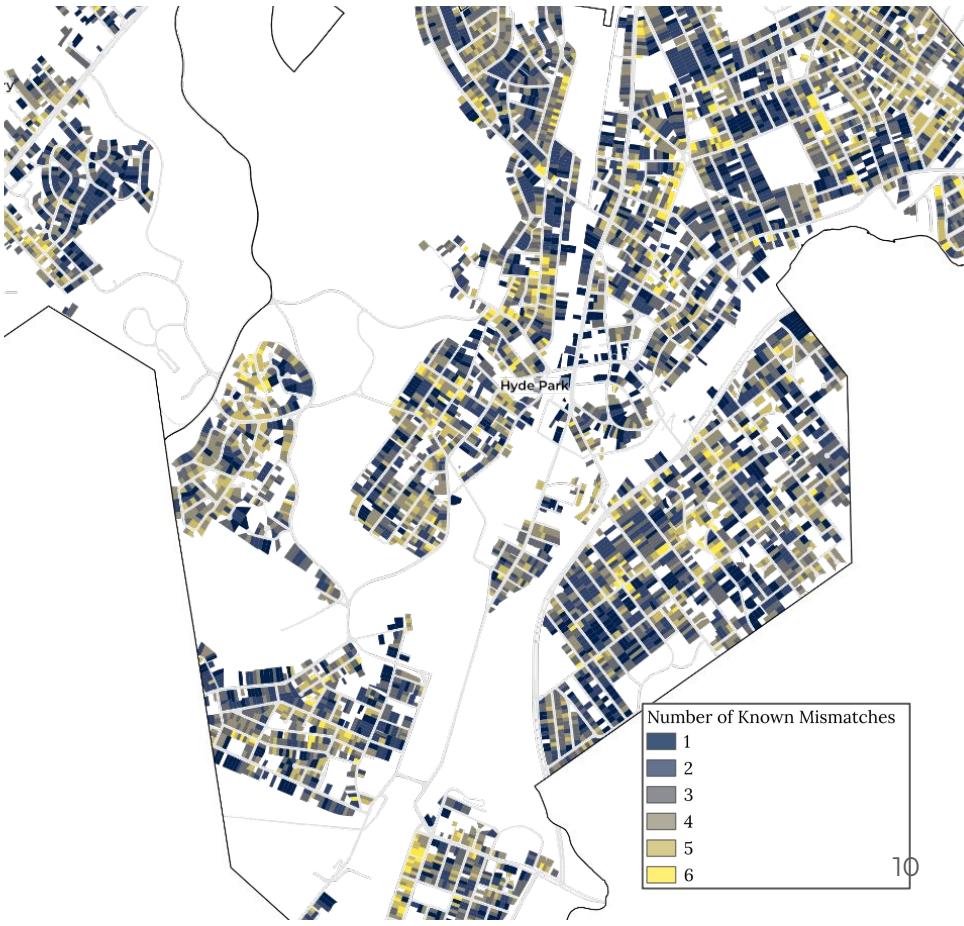


# ZONING MISMATCHES ARE PREVALENT IN HYDE PARK

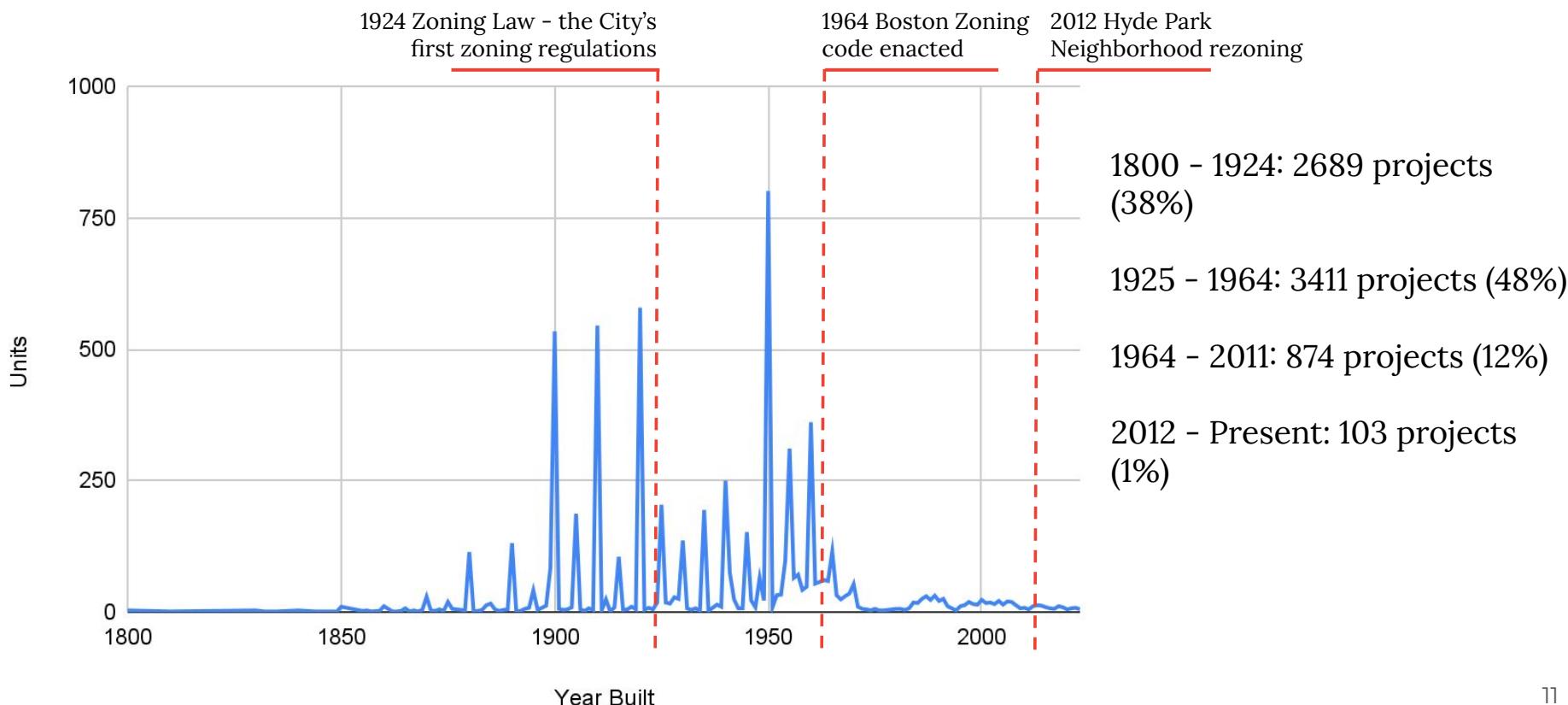
There are 8,266 total lots in Hyde Park. Of those, **7,729 lots have small-scale residential zoning, representing 9,398 homes.**

From dark blue to yellow, this map shows **where residential zoning is smaller than what is already there**, based on 6 easy-to-measure metrics. Under just these 6 metrics, **at least 6,100 lots in Hyde Park (98% of analyzed area) have poorly-suited zoning:**

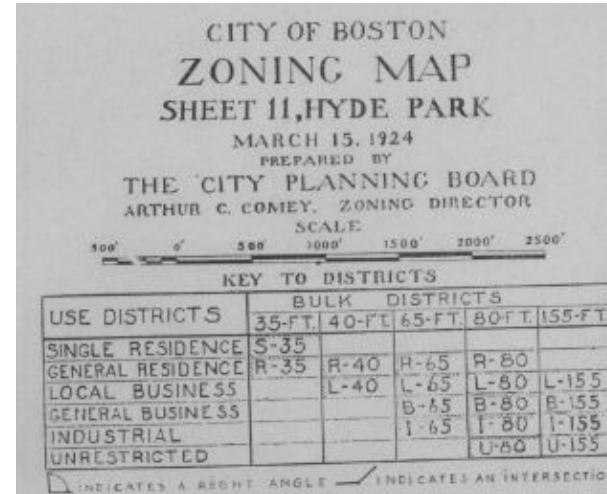
- Minimum lot size
- FAR (floor area ratio:  
gross building area / lot size)
- Unit count
- Front yard
- Side yard
- Rear yard



# MOST OF HYDE PARK'S HOUSING PREDATES MODERN ZONING LAWS.



# 1924 ZONING RULES WERE MORE FLEXIBLE THAN TODAY'S.



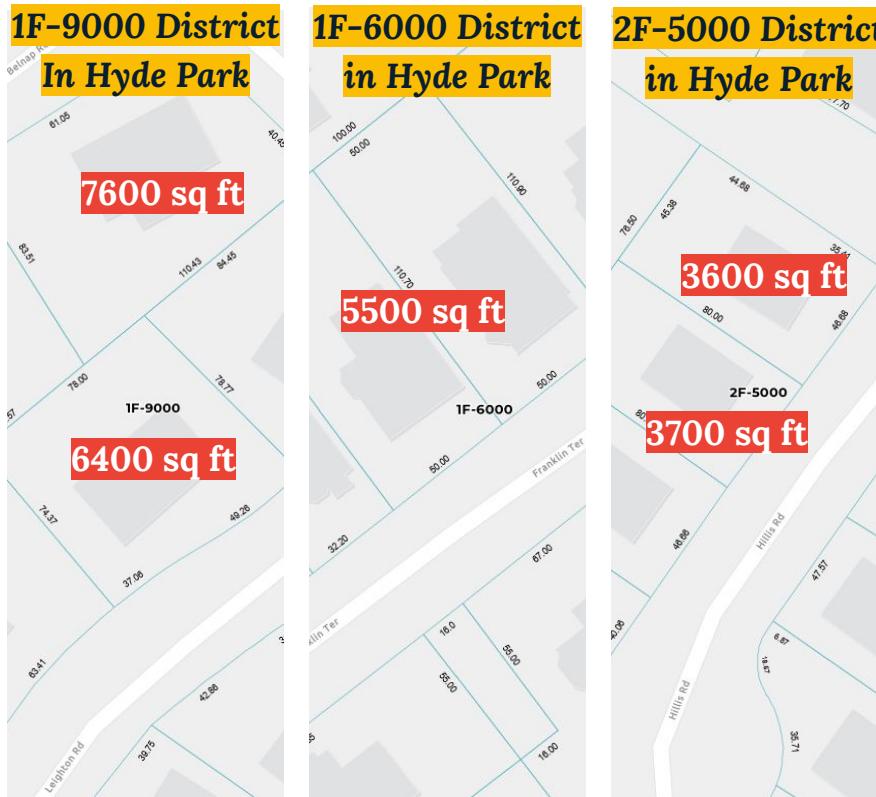
1924 District	Height	Rear Yard	Side Yard	Front Yard
S-35 / R-35	35 ft	25'	6'	10' or 30'
R-40 / L-40	40 ft (3 stories)	20'	6'	10' or 25'

Today's zoning:

35' height maximum

40' min rear  
10' min side  
20-25' min front

# ZONING RULES ARE TOO RESTRICTIVE FOR EXISTING LOTS.



**55% of lots are smaller than the requirement minimum, yet these homes already exist.**

Today's zoning rules don't match the historic neighborhood pattern.

Actual Lot Sizes:

25th percentile: 4800 sf

50th percentile: 5700 sf

75th percentile: 7300 sf

# HYDE PARK'S TYPICAL SIDE YARD IS 6 FT, BUT ZONING REQUIRES 10 FT.

Zoning requires a minimum side yard of 10'.

84% of lots have side yards **below** the required minimum in Hyde Park.

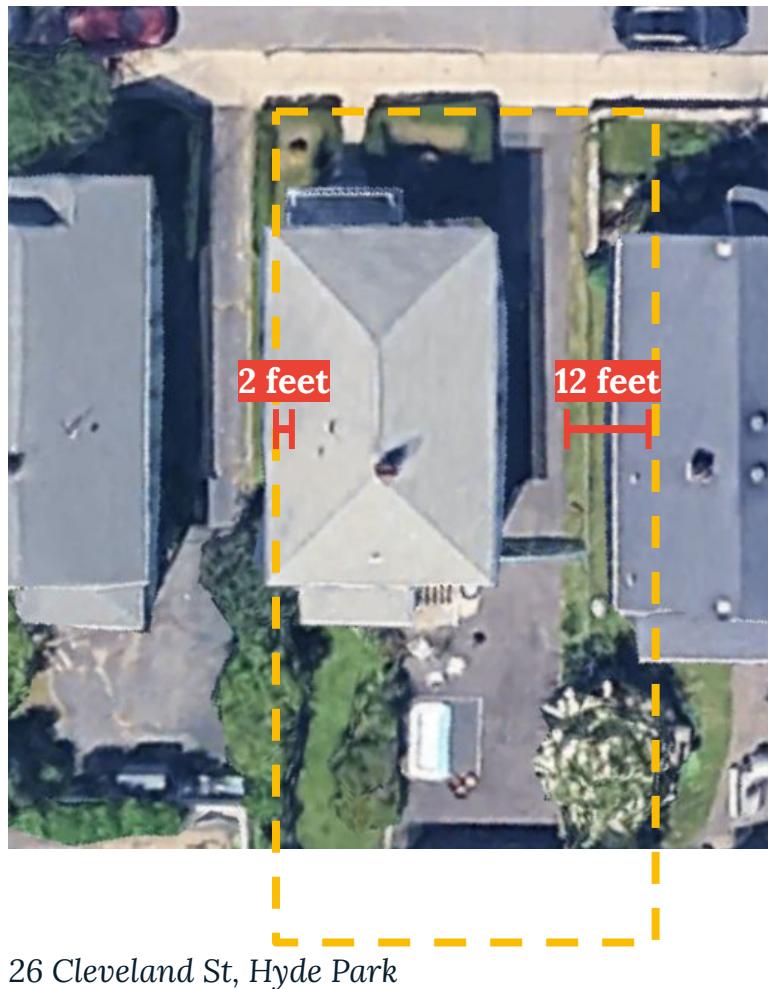
Actual Side Yards:

25th percentile: 4 ft

50th percentile: 6 ft

75th percentile: 9 ft

1924 zoning required ~6'.



26 Cleveland St, Hyde Park

# HYDE PARK'S TYPICAL FRONT YARD IS 16 FT, AND ZONING REQUIRES 20 FT.

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Zoning requires a minimum front yard of 20'.

80% of lots have front yards **below** the required minimum in Hyde Park.

Actual Front Yards:

25th percentile: 11 ft

50th percentile: 16 ft

75th percentile: 22 ft

1924 zoning required ~10'.



11-15 Roxana St, Hyde Park

# HYDE PARK'S TYPICAL REAR YARD IS 38 FT, AND ZONING REQUIRES 40 FT.

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Zoning requires a minimum rear yard of 40'. 52% of lots have rear yards **below** the required minimum in Hyde Park. These calculations deliberately look only at the main structure, ignoring all garages or sheds.

Actual Rear Yards:

25th percentile: 11 ft

50th percentile: 38 ft

75th percentile: 56 ft

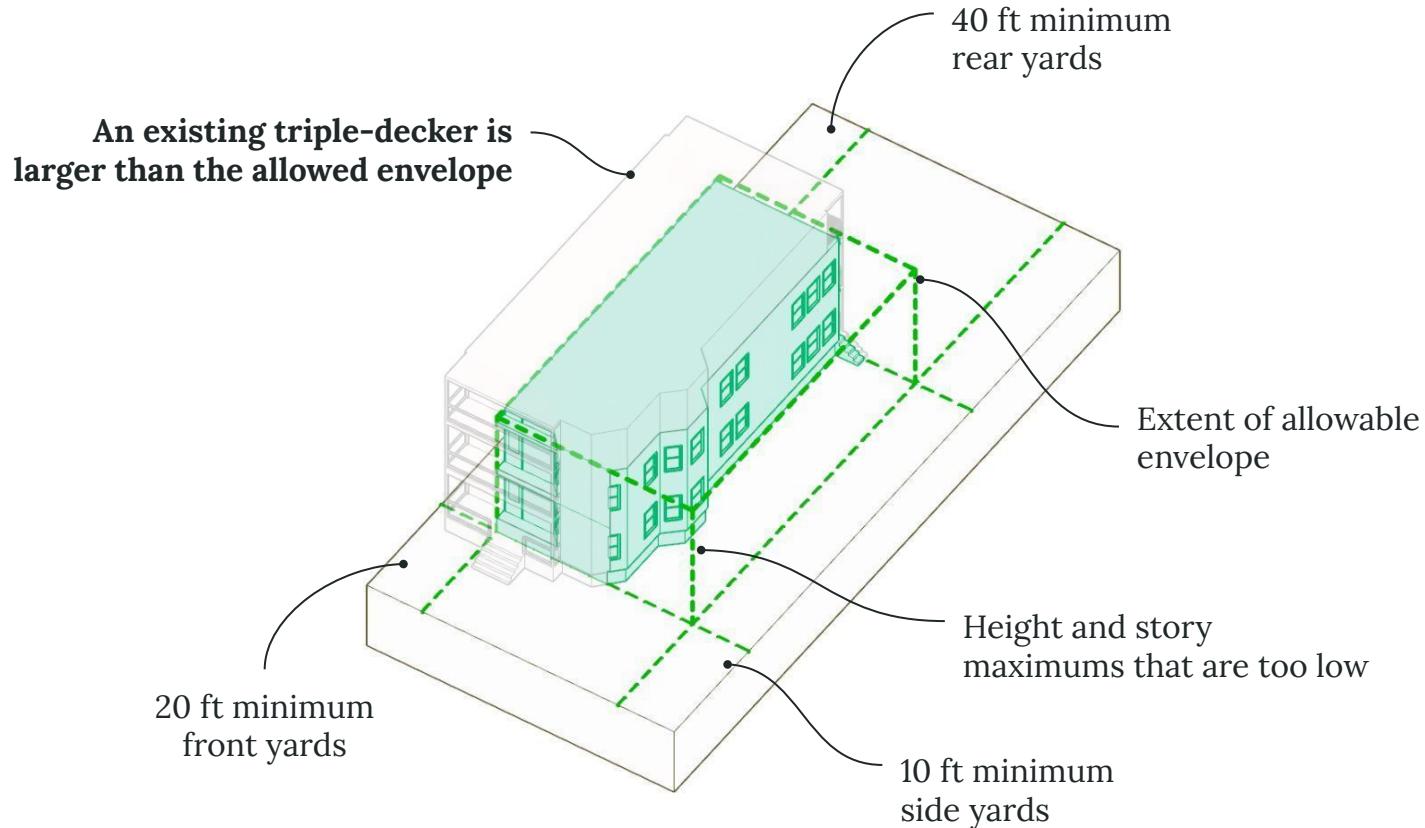
1924 zoning required ~20-25'.



225 and 229 Kennebec St, Hyde Park

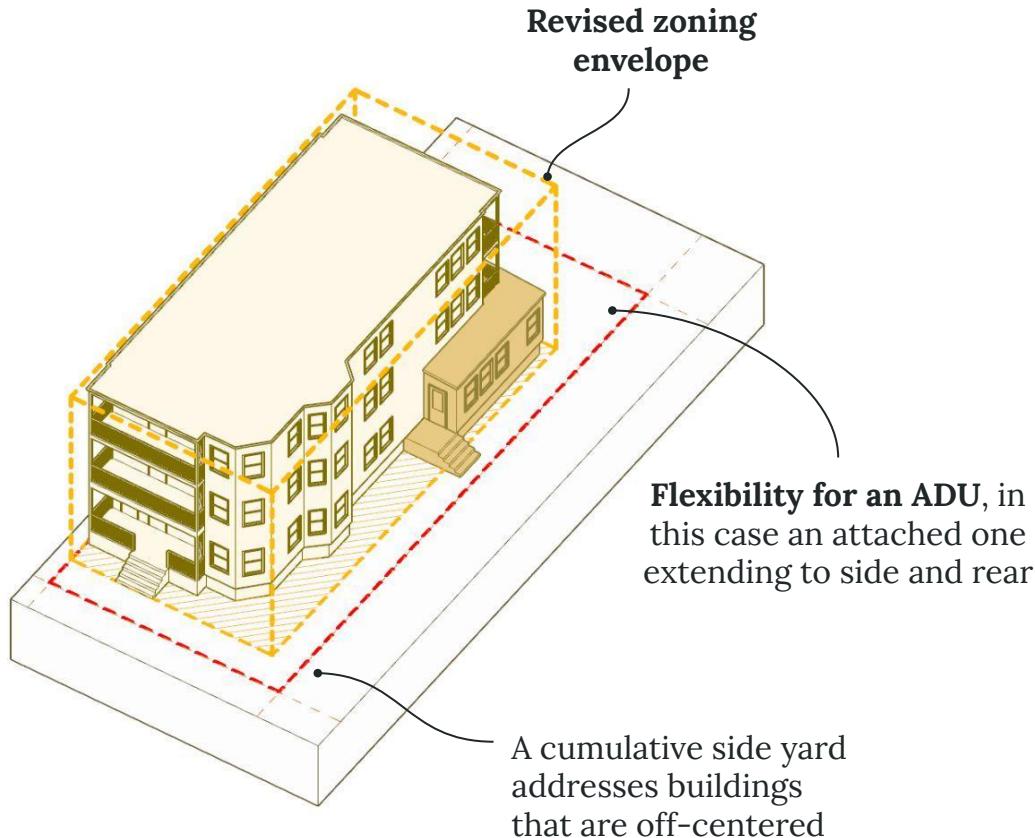
# THESE RULES DISALLOW ALMOST EVERYTHING.

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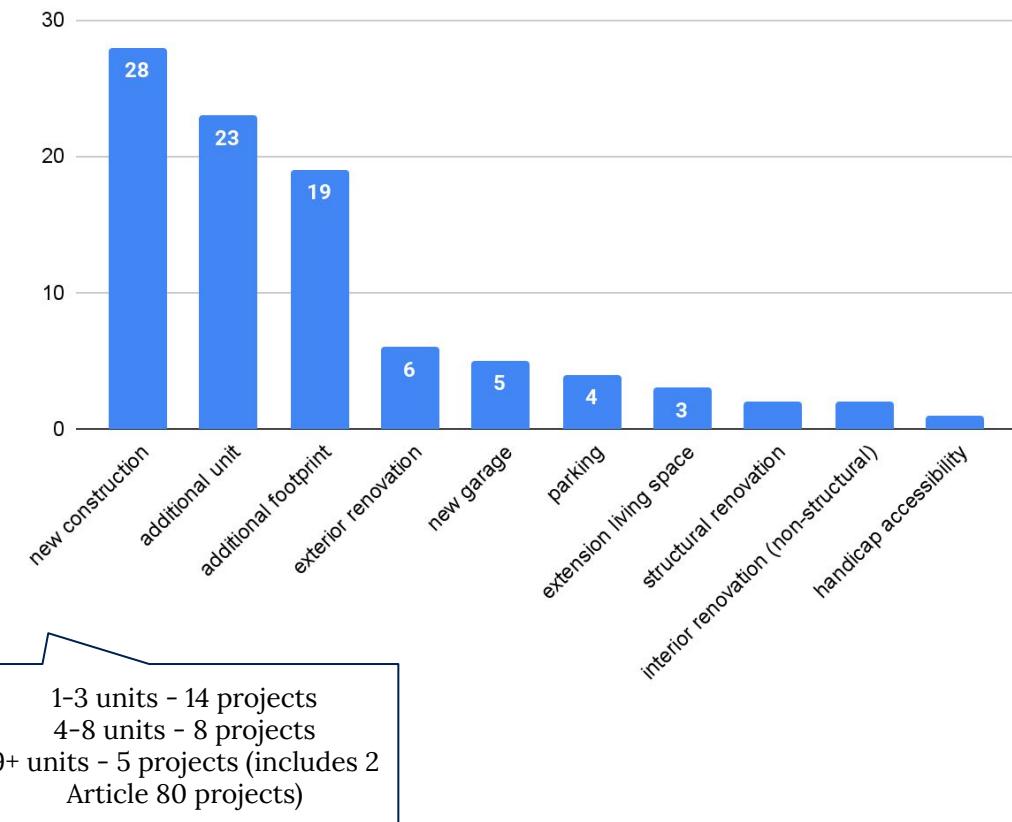


# WE WANT TO UPDATE ZONING TO MATCH HYDE PARK.

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# UPDATED ZONING COULD HAVE STREAMLINED 100+ CASES SINCE 2022 (60+ YEARS OF WAITING).

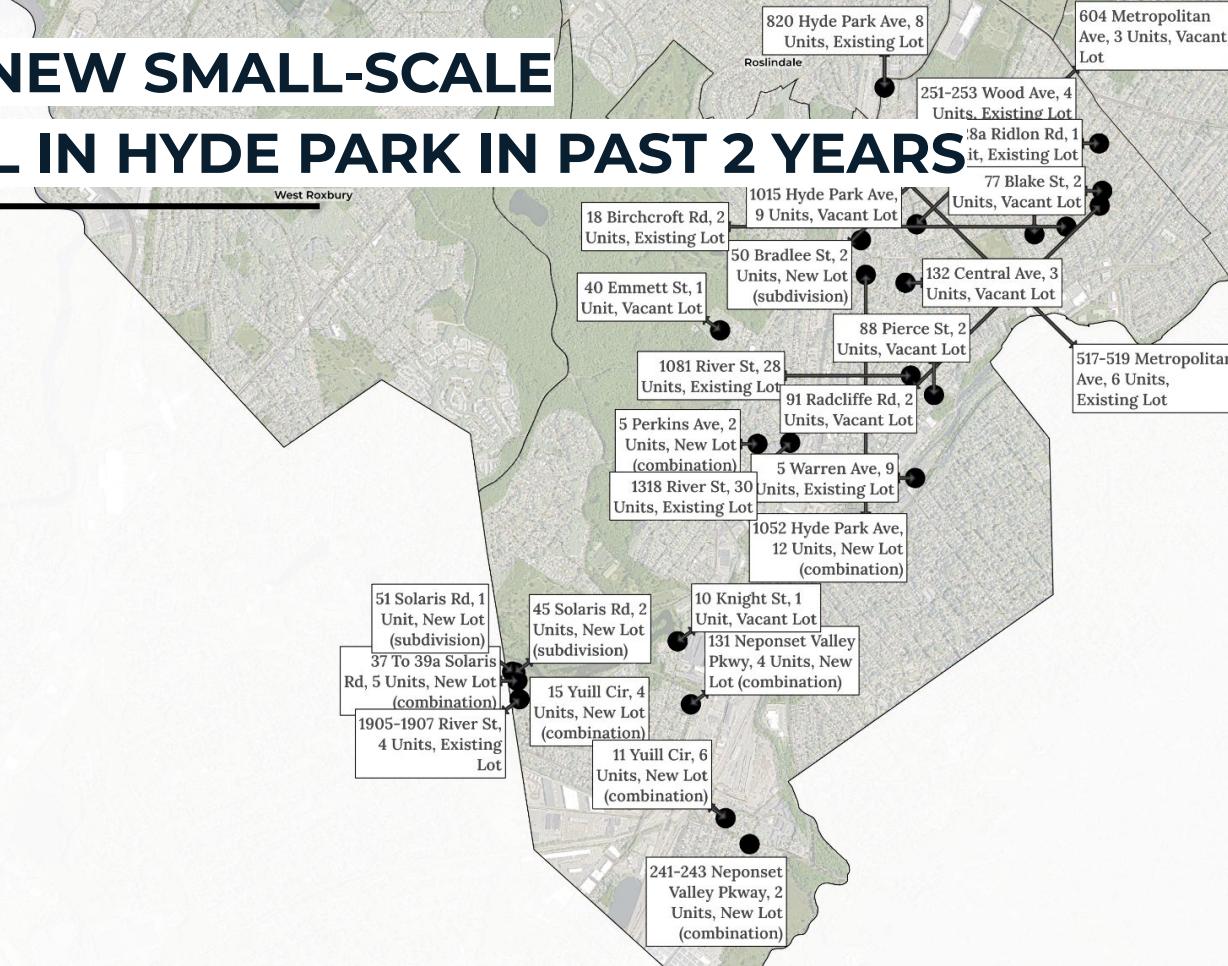


**101** sub-Article 80 projects have been approved by the ZBA since 2022 in Hyde Park in residential subdistricts.

**If residential zoning allowed** for small renovations on existing buildings along with contextual infill development, the **vast majority of these would not have needed zoning relief**.

# APPROVED NEW SMALL-SCALE

## RESIDENTIAL IN HYDE PARK IN PAST 2 YEARS



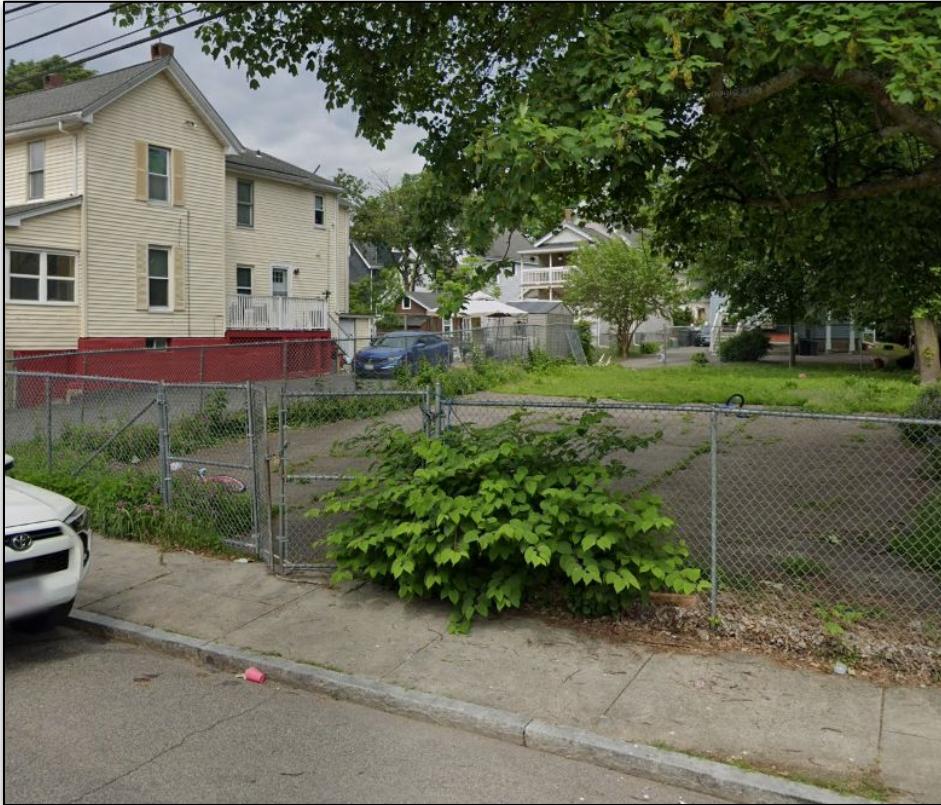
# NEW CONSTRUCTION CASE STUDY: 88 PIERCE STREET

Project: The proposal would create a new two-unit home on a vacant lot, providing additional housing and making full use of the basement and attic for living space.

The proposed structure is similar in size, scale, and design to surrounding properties.



# NEW CONSTRUCTION CASE STUDY: 88 PIERCE ST



2F-5000 Zoning Mismatches	Required	Proposed	Surrounding Context
Lot Area Insufficient	5,000 SF	4,583 SF	3,000-7,000
Lot Frontage Insufficient	50'	45'	30'-60'
FAR Excessive	0.5	0.91	0.3-0.5
Usable Open Space	1,750 SF	1,007 SF	-
Side Yard Insufficient	10'	5'	2'-15'
Rear Yard Insufficient	40'	27'	+/-30'

# EXTEND LIVING SPACE CASE STUDY: 79 W MILTON STREET

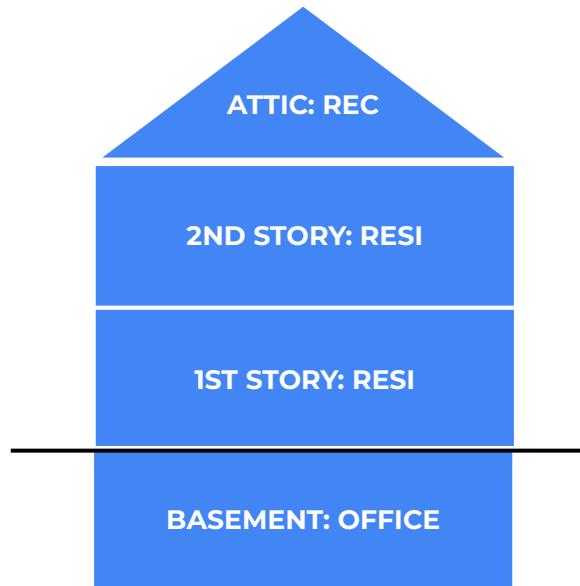
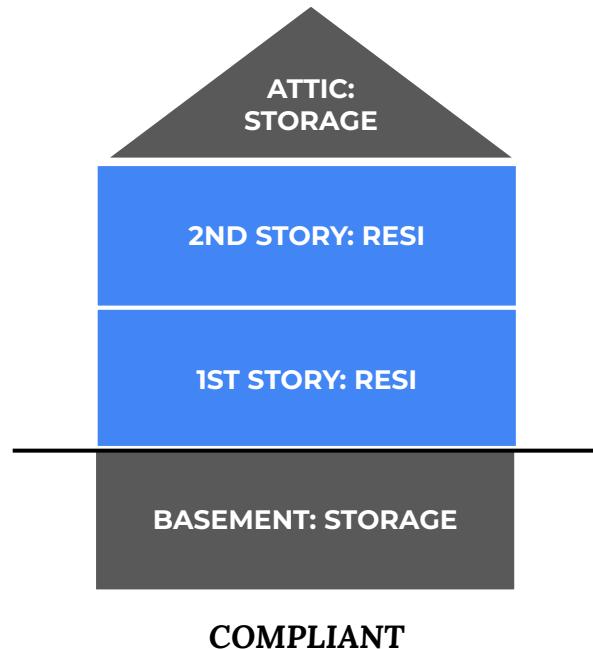
Project: The project would add new living space in the basement and create three total housing units, including an accessory dwelling unit (ADU), within the existing building. The outside of the home will remain the same.



1F-6000 Zoning Mismatches	Required	Proposed	Surrounding Context
Insufficient Off-Street Parking	4 spots	2	2
Excessive FAR	0.5	0.5038	varied
Use Forbidden	1 unit	3 units + ADU	1-2 units

# EXTENDING LIVING SPACE IN ONE'S HOME IS CAUGHT IN MORE PROCESSES THAN IT SHOULD BE.

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*Even though the building floorplate did NOT change,  
change of use affects GFA calculation*

# ADDITIONAL UNIT CASE STUDY: 45-47 BRAEBURN RD

Project: This project legalizes an existing apartment within a two-family home that has been in use since 2012. While the property is zoned for one-unit use, nearby homes include a mix of one-, two-, and three-unit buildings.



1F-6000 Zoning	Required	Proposed	Surrounding Context
Off-Street Parking	3 spots	2 (existing)	0-2
Use	Forbidden	2 units	1-3 units
FAR	0.5	0.32	0.22-0.5
Height	2.5	2.5	1-3
Usable Open Space/du	1,800 SF	-	-

# INTERIOR ALTERATIONS CASE STUDY: 30 PRESCOTT STREET

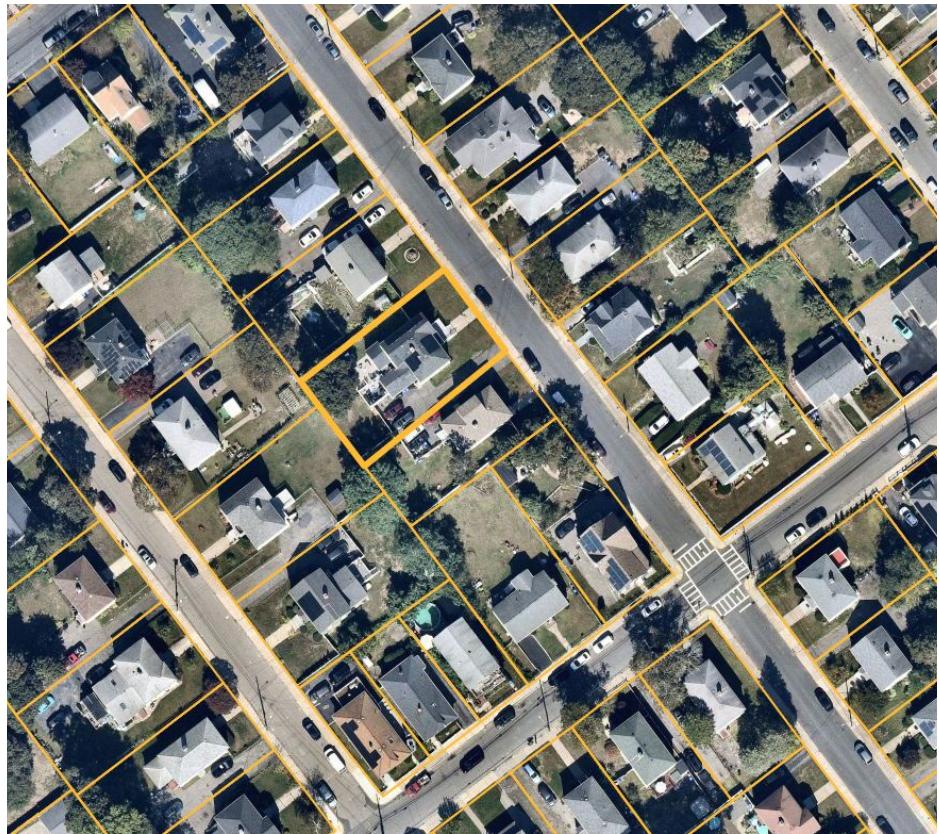
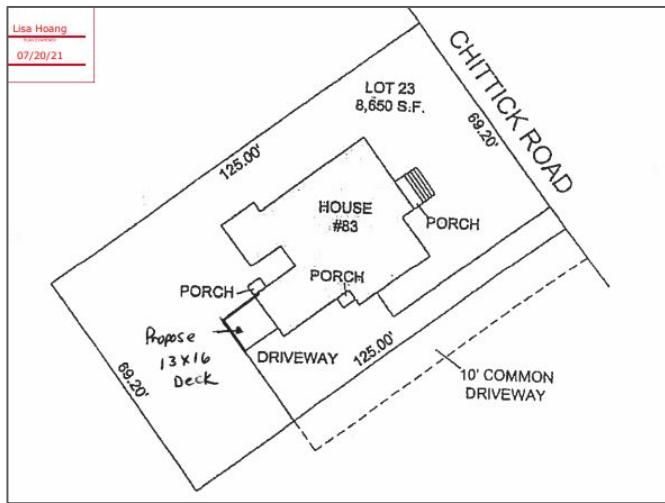
Project: Renovations to existing attic to add additional living space and improve safety.  
Add second floor deck.



# EXTERIOR CHANGES CASE STUDY: 83 CHITTICK ROAD

Project: Add a ground level rear deck to an existing property.

The proposed structure is similar in size, scale, and design to surrounding properties.



# CASE STUDY: MATTAPAN REZONING



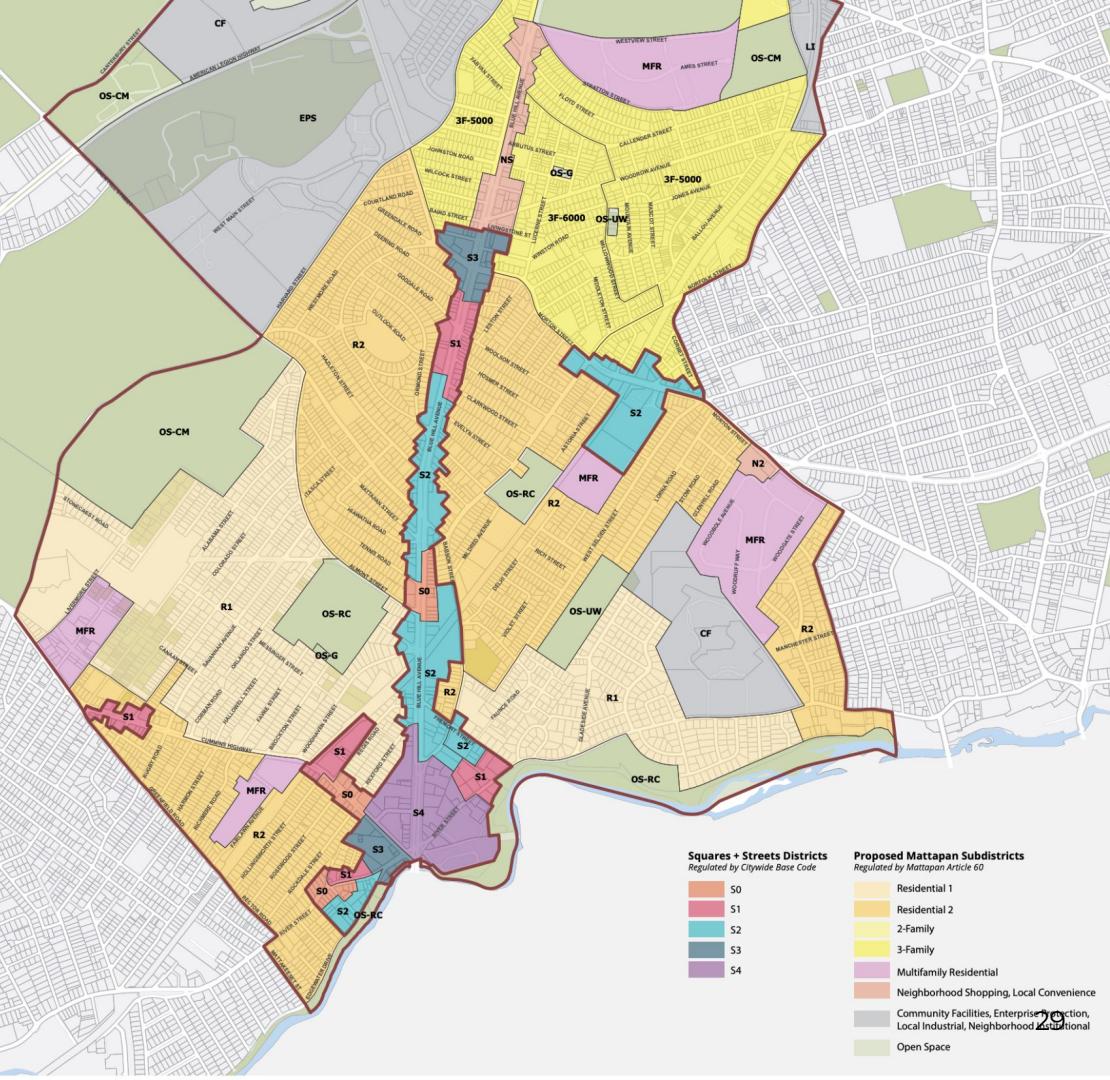
## PLAN: MATTAPAN

May 11, 2023 - PLAN: Mattapan adopted

## February 7, 2024 - New residential zoning in Mattapan adopted

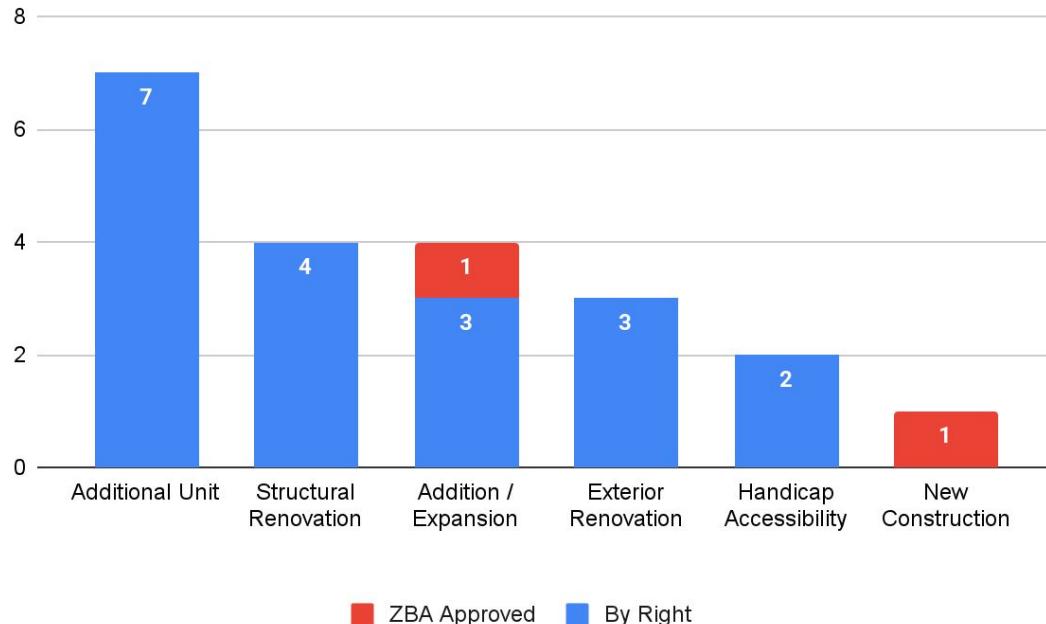
## **May 30, 2024 - Mattapan Squares + Streets Zoning adopted**

- Existing Mattapan residents are **stable in their homes** and new residents have **affordable housing options**
- Mattapan residents have **safe and reliable transit connections** to jobs, schools, and community spaces in Mattapan and throughout Boston
- **Mattapan Square** and other neighborhood nodes are home to **vibrant, thriving local businesses and cultural spaces** that reflect the needs of residents and uphold neighborhood identity



# AFTER REZONING, 90% OF SMALL SCALE RESIDENTIAL PROJECTS ARE ALLOWED, UP FROM 46% PRIOR TO REZONING.

Projects that have been approved:



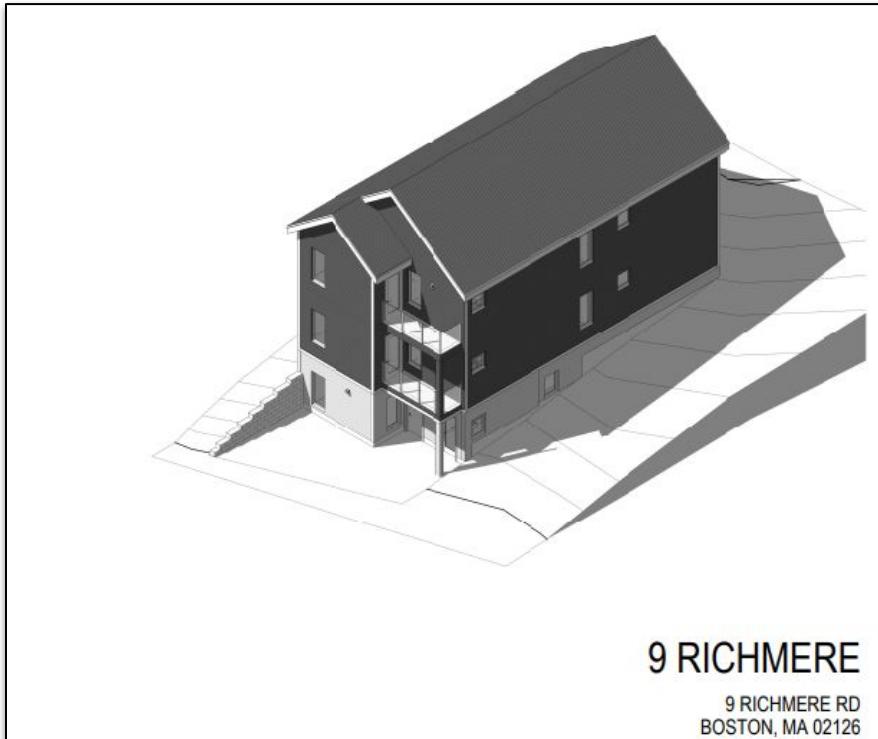
21 total small-scale residential projects with permits issued since 2/7/24

19 by right, 2 through ZBA

*Does not include zoning exempt projects such as fire alarms, solar panels, as well as projects that do not physically alter the building such as subdivision of lots.*

# NEW CONSTRUCTION CASE STUDY: 9 RICHMERE RD (ZBA)

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Project: New construction three-unit dwelling with 2 parking spaces and bike space.

This project went to the ZBA for having tandem parking spaces.



# ADDITIONAL UNIT CASE STUDY: 43 GOODALE RD (ALLOWED)



EXISTING FRONT VIEW,  
GOODALE ROAD



EXISTING FRONT / EAST VIEW



EXISTING REAR / EAST VIEW

This project adds a new unit in the basement to an existing three-unit home, becoming a four-unit home.



To be allowed, below-ground units still have to meet many requirements beyond zoning: building code (appropriate egress and floor heights), fire code, and being outside of a flood-prone area.

# OTHER USES IN HYDE PARK RESIDENTIAL AREAS



# SERVICE ESTABLISHMENT - SMALL

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## definition:

An establishment, open to customers, that provides services, with or without the exchange of goods. Examples of a Service Establishment include, but are not limited to:

Barber, beauty, or body art establishment.

Tailor, laundry or location for dry-cleaning drop-off;

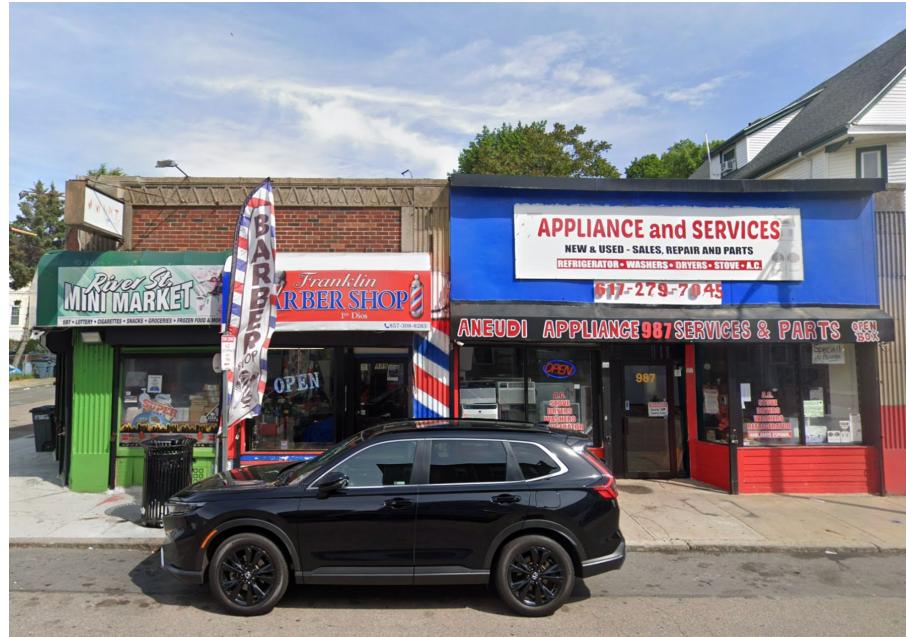
Post office or parcel pickup/dropoff location;

Fitness center or yoga studio;

Animal daycare, grooming, kennel; or similar use.

Small - Total square footage less than 10,000 square feet.

Large - Total square footage greater than or equal to 10,000 square feet.



**Various service/retail establishments  
989-992 River St (Hyde Park)  
2F-5000**

## CHILD CARE

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### definition:

Any facility operated on a regular basis, whether known as a child nursery, nursery school, kindergarten, child playschool, progressive school, child development center, or preschool, or known under any other name, which receives children not of common parentage under seven (7) years of age, or under sixteen (16) years of age if those children have special needs as defined in Massachusetts General Laws, for nonresidential custody and care during part or all of the day separate from their parents. Any facility of this type shall comply with the standards, inspectional requirements, and dimensional regulations as established by the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (or a successor agency responsible for the state licensing of home-based child care facilities).



**Nereida's Family Day Care  
763 Beechmont St (Hyde Park)  
1F-6000**

# ACCESSORY HOME OCCUPATION

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## definition:

A facility where one or more persons do professional, administrative, or similar work, including but not limited to coworking spaces and businesses which may meet with clients on an appointment basis, such as insurance brokers and real estate offices. Office does not include a medical office for a medical professional practicing under a medical license.



**Cruzan Affair - Wedding & Event Planning  
10 Holmfield Ave (Hyde Park)  
1F-6000**

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**Juliette's Alterations  
59 Wachusett St (Hyde Park)  
1F-6000**

# ART STUDIOS

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## definition:

A facility for the creation of physical art or audiovisual content, where the activities produce little to no vibration, fumes, or other nuisances more typical in industrial or manufacturing uses, including but not limited to arts production space and studios, dance and music rehearsal space, or similar use. Such use may include the sale of art which does not require any permanent and dedicated space and is incidental to the Art Studio use. Any space permanently dedicated to sales shall constitute a Retail Store.



**studioinboston (Recording Studio)  
55 Cromwell Rd (Hyde Park)  
1F-6000**

# NEXT STEPS

**Fall 2025:** Collect feedback from you around your priorities for small-scale residential areas

**Winter 2026:** Create first draft of new set of zoning districts, mapped across Roslindale, West Roxbury, and Hyde Park

**Spring/Summer 2026:** Edit, refine, and revise districts and mapping through public process



# OCT/NOV OUTREACH

**October 28, 2025, 11:00a-1:00p**

Virtual Office Hours - [Sign Up](#)

**October 30, 2025, 3:00p-5:00p**

Virtual Office Hours - [Sign Up](#)

**November 5, 2025, 6:00p-7:30p**

West Roxbury Neighborhood Meeting

BCYF West Roxbury (Roche)

**November 13, 2025, 11:00a-1:00p**

Virtual Office Hours - [Sign Up](#)

*Registration required 24 hours in advance, otherwise Office Hours will be cancelled.*



# Q&A AND DISCUSSION

1. What is important to you as we rethink what zoning should be regulating in Hyde Park?
2. What worries you about potential changes to residential areas?
3. How do you see Hyde Park as similar to and different from your neighboring communities?
4. What are ways you want to be engaged with and involved in this going forward?



# THANK YOU

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We appreciate your time and hope you enjoyed this presentation.

## HAVE QUESTIONS?

**Will Cohen**

[will.cohen@boston.gov](mailto:will.cohen@boston.gov)

**Jein Park**

[jein.park@boston.gov](mailto:jein.park@boston.gov)

**Initiative Team**

[residentialzoning@boston.gov](mailto:residentialzoning@boston.gov)

**OR VISIT:**

[bostonplans.org/neighborhood-housing](http://bostonplans.org/neighborhood-housing)



Planning Department

CITY of **BOSTON**

# OUTDATED HYDE PARK RESIDENTIAL DIMENSIONAL REGULATIONS (ARTICLE 69)

Looking at just the six factors in yellow, **98% of Hyde Park's residential lots have zoning that doesn't match what is already there.**

	Lot area, Minimum for Dwell. Unit(s) Specified (Sq.Ft.)	Additional Lot Area for Ea. Addit'l Dwell. Unit (Sq.Ft.)	Lot Width Minimum (Feet)	Lot Frontage Minimum (Feet)	Floor Area Ratio Maximum	Building Height Maximum		Usable Open Space Minimum Sq. Ft. Per Dwelling Unit	Front Yard Minimum Depth (Feet)	Side Yard Minimum Width (Feet)	Rear Yard Minimum Depth (Feet)	Rear Yard Maximum Occupancy by Accessory Buildings (Percent)	Max Unit Count
						Stories	Feet						
<b>1F-9,000</b>													
1 Family Detached	9,000	N/A	70	70	0.3	2-½	35	1,800	25	10	40	25	1
Other Use	9,000	N/A	70	70	0.3	2-½	35	1,800	25	10	40	25	1
<b>1F-6,000</b>													
1 Family Detached	6,000	N/A	60	60	0.5	2-½	35	1,800	25	10	40	25	1
Other Use	6,000	N/A	60	60	0.5	2-½	35	1,800	25	10	40	25	1
<b>NONCONFORMITY ACROSS HYDE PARK</b>	55%				53%				80%	75%	52%		19%

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						Stories	Feet						
<b>2F-5000</b>													
1 Family Detached	<b>5,000 for 1 unit</b>	3,000	50	50	<b>0.5</b>	2-½	35	1,750	<b>20</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>40</b>	25	<b>1</b>
Other Use	<b>8,000</b>	N/A	50	50	<b>0.5</b>	2-½	35	1,750	<b>20</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>40</b>	25	<b>1</b>
<b>NONCONFORMITY ACROSS HYDE PARK</b>	<b>55%</b>				<b>53%</b>				<b>80%</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>52%</b>		<b>19%</b>

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						Stories	Feet						
<b>3F-4000</b>													
Row House Building or Town House Building	<b>4,000 for 1 unit</b>	2,000	40	40	<b>0.8</b>	3	35	80 s.f. per	<b>20</b>	10	40	25	<b>3</b>
Semi-Attached or Detached Dwelling	<b>4,000 for 1 unit</b>	2,000	40	40	<b>0.8</b>	3	35	800 s.f. per	<b>20</b>	10	40	25	<b>3</b>
Any Other Use	<b>8,000</b>	N/A	45	45	<b>0.8</b>	3	35	800 s.f. Per Lot	<b>20</b>	10	40	25	<b>3</b>
<b>MFR (Multifamily Residential Subdistrict)</b>													
MFR	<b>5,000</b>	2,500	none	none	<b>2</b>	3	35	400 s.f. Per Unit	<b>20</b>	10	40	25	-
NONCONFORMITY ACROSS HYDE PARK	<b>55%</b>				<b>53%</b>				<b>80%</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>52%</b>		<b>19%</b>