

# Preserving Historic Districts: Brookline Village and 3A Compliance

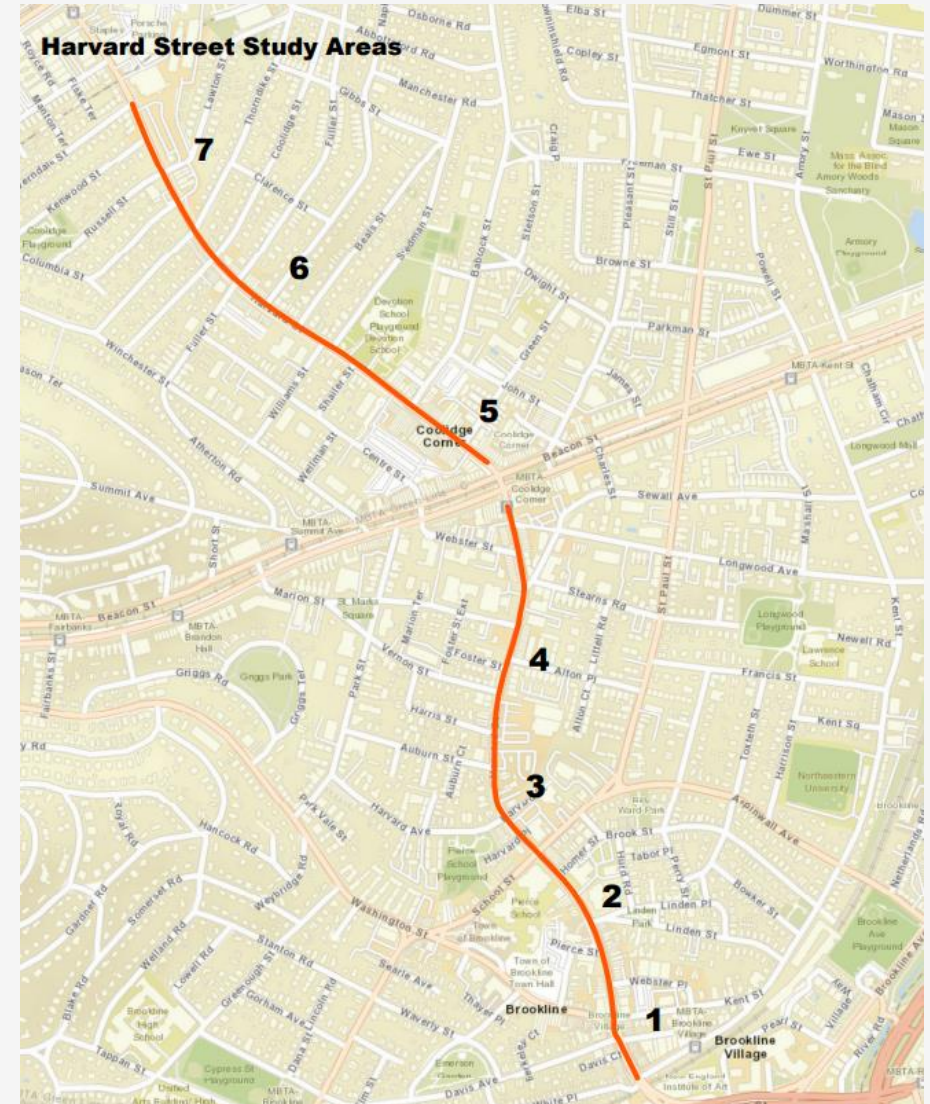
Jacob Collins, Preservation Planner

Town of Brookline

Harvard Street

# Harvard Street

- North/ South Corridor in Brookline, Massachusetts originally constructed c.1661 to connect Boston to Cambridge
- Now links three urban corridors:
  - Route 9 (to the south)
  - Commonwealth Avenue (to the north)
  - Beacon Street (at the center)
- Intersects with 3 Green Line stops
- The Brookline Preservation Commission published design guidelines for areas north of Beacon Street in 2017 (never realized)



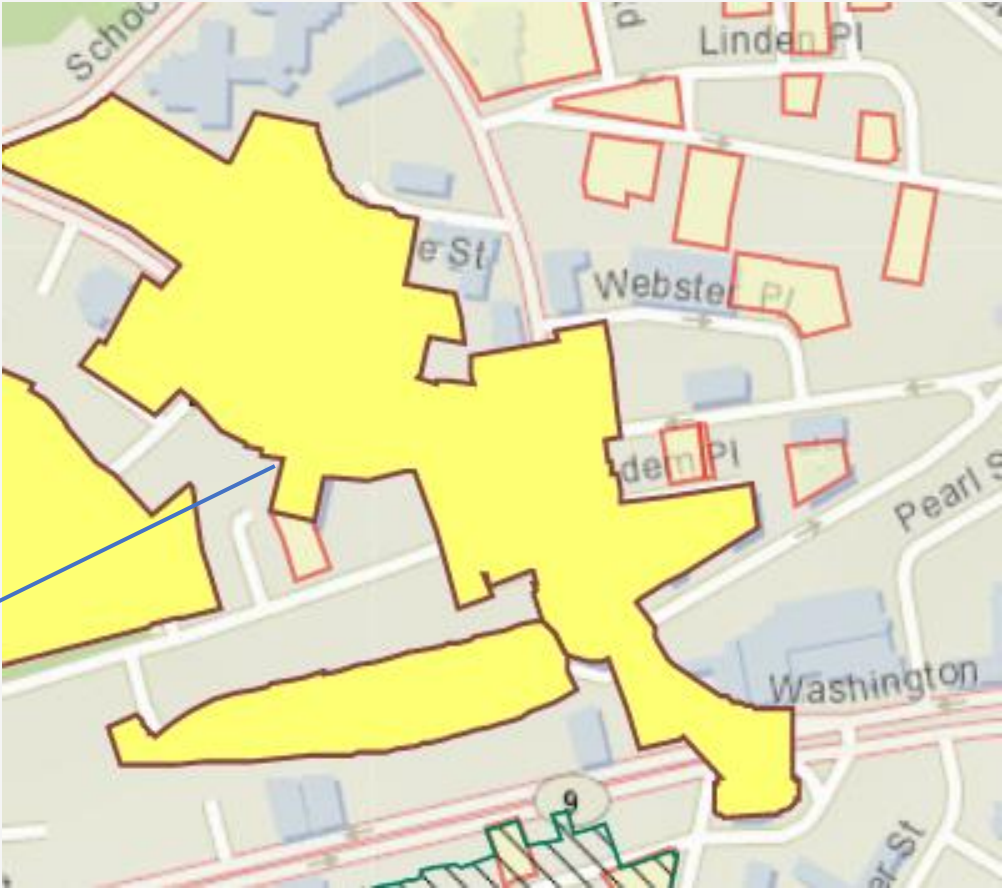
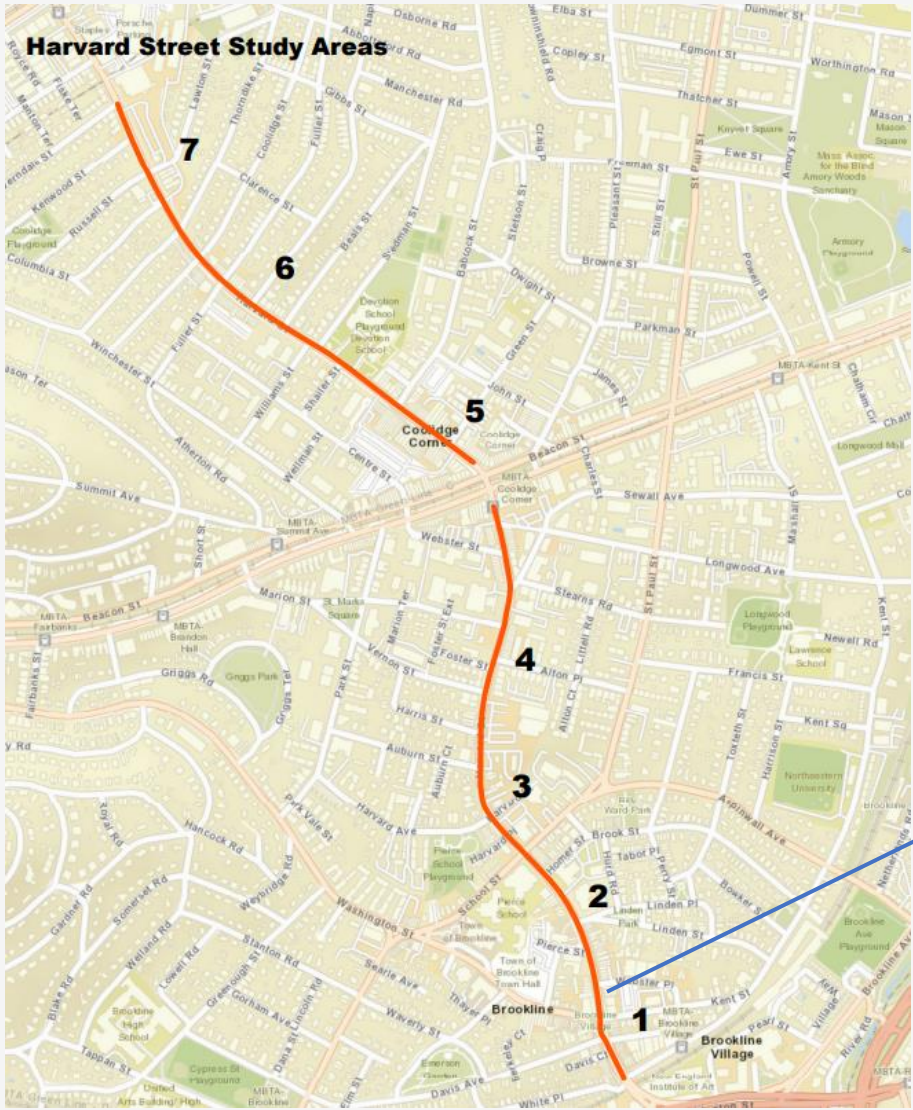
# Harvard Street- Building Types

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# Brookline Village Commercial District

# Brookline Village

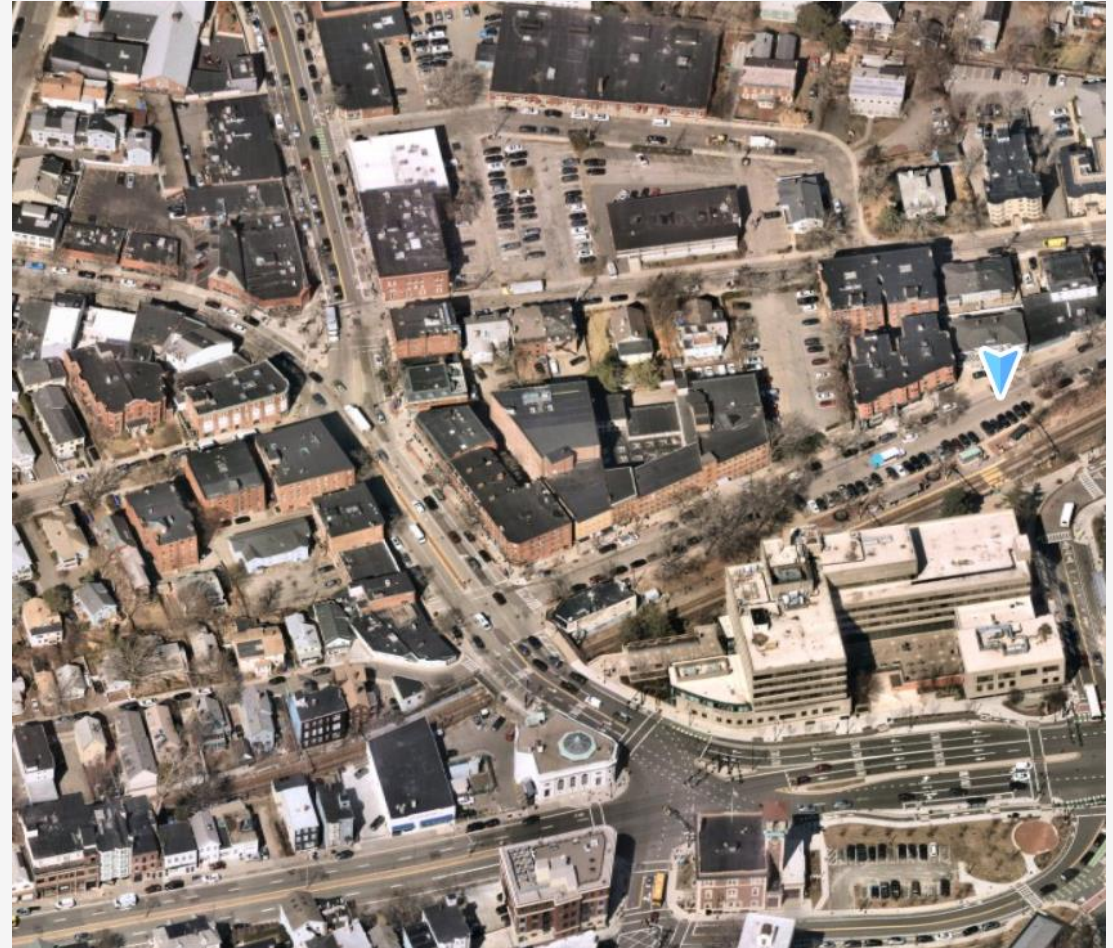


Update when Jed Provides Maps

# Brookline Village- Significance

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- Listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1979 under Criterion A
- Significant as being the center of Brookline's nineteenth century development from a rural village to a bustling commercial and residential suburb and for its concentration of fine late-nineteenth and early-twentieth Century Brick Architecture
- Although some twentieth century alterations have occurred, the district offers a unified vista of a late nineteenth-century commercial area that remains in active use.



# Brookline Village- Historic Views

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# Brookline Village- Current Views

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# Brookline Village- Building Types

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207-213 Washington Street, 1875



206-218 Washington Street, 1917

## Brookline Village- Building Types (Cont.)

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14-16 Davis Street, C.1886



11 Holden Street, 1857

# Brookline Village- Planning Perspective

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- Developed in the 1870s as a mixed-use commercial center
- Presently acts a “Main Street”, providing vital retail for local residents while also attracting visitors from other areas of Brookline and beyond
- Provides a blueprint for the compact, sustainable walkable communities we aspire to create

... A development pattern that is not possible under the Town of Brookline’s current restrictive zoning



# Brookline Village- Planning Perspective

## PHOTO PALETTE | Area 1 Station Street at Washington to Kent Street at Harvard



207 Washington Street (east side)



217 Washington (east side)



231 - 241 Washington (east side)



236 Washington (west side)



279 Harvard (west side)



6 Harvard Square (east side of Harvard)

Comments: High-quality architecture and materials define this historic National Register District and creative economy. Very coherent street wall and development pattern. Model of great urbanism and mixed development.

## Area 1 Station Street at Washington to Kent Street at Harvard



### Summary of Existing Conditions

Walkable environment with tree-lined mixed-use streetscapes, mostly ground floor commercial; provides retail, services, restaurants, and housing

### Characteristics

Walkable urban context  
Attached buildings; little to no parking on site  
Small lots and building footprints  
Small to 0 front setback (extension of sidewalk)  
Small to 0 side setback  
Primarily 4 stories with 1- and 3-story  
Shopfront frontages (flush with sidewalk)  
Recessed entrances; occasional stairs (residential)

### Existing Building Types

Main Street (mixed use, mid-rise, block-scale)

### In Brookline Village Commercial Nat'l Register District

Commercial buildings with housing built in the 1870s and 1880s in the late Victorian style (Gothic, Italianate, Mansard); superb artisanship; sensitive renovations due to community pressure, no documented design standards

Features include paneled brick, arched windows on upper floors, bulkheads (at sidewalk), corbeled cornices  
Materials include brick, cast iron columns

Source: <https://mbc-macris.net/#1/details?mbcid=BKLE>

Standards	Regulations (G-2.0)	1 207 Washingt on	2 217 Washington	3 231-214 Washington	4 6 Harvard SQ	5 1 Harvard ST	6 236 Washington
Min Lot Area (sf)	None	4315	4133	4013	2308	9124	4827
Min Lot Width (ft)	None	64	62	70 to 47	42	101	69
Stories	NA	4	4	4	4	3	4
Height to Ridge(ft)	45 feet max	50	43	47	50	50	51
Floor Area Ratio	2.0	3.3	2.44	2.87	4.39	2.5	3.5
Lot coverage	NA	0.72	0.64	0.73	0.93	0.65	0.83
Front (Prim/Sec)	None	5   8.5	5	5   0	1.5   0	0   0	0   0
Side (L   R)	(H+L)/6	0	0   0	0	0	0	4
Rear	30	4	22 to 12	14	2	29	9
Uses	Gr FI Com	retail, resi	retail, resi	retail, resi	retail, resi	retail, office	retail, resi

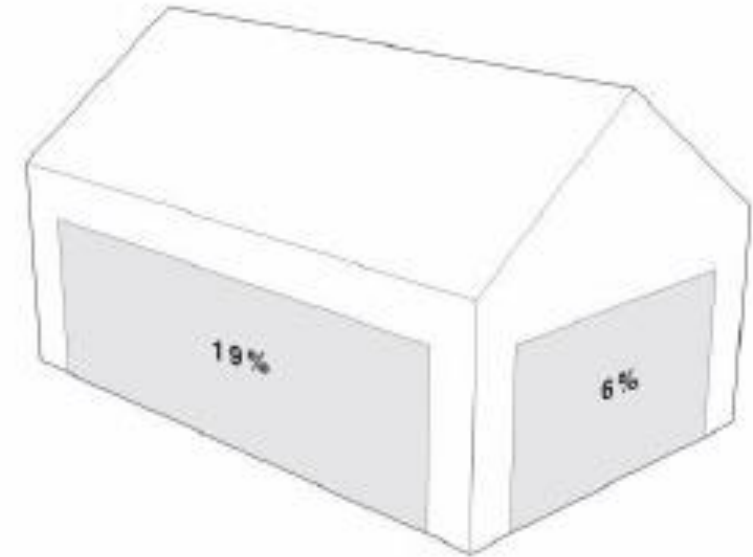
# Demolition Delay By-Law

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- 18 month demolition delay on National Register-listed properties\*
- Demolition may be triggered for “The systematic removal, effacement, or destruction of the exterior architectural elements which define or contribute to the historic character of the Building” (Article 5.3)
- 10 Business Day Initial Review → 30 Business Days Until A Determination of Significance Must Be Made → 30 Days (+/-) Until a Request for a Lift of Stay Will Be Reviewed → 0-6 Months Until a Lift of Stay is Granted

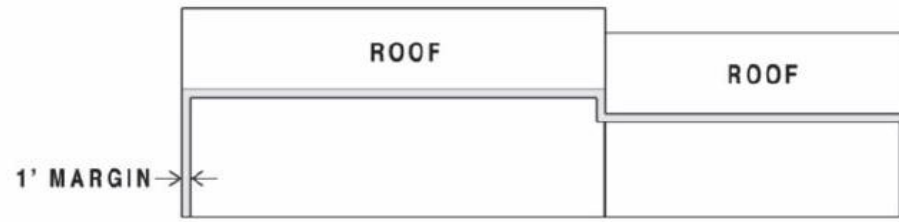
\* In Fall 2022, The Town of Brookline voted to temporarily extend the demolition delay period on buildings found significant for up to two years



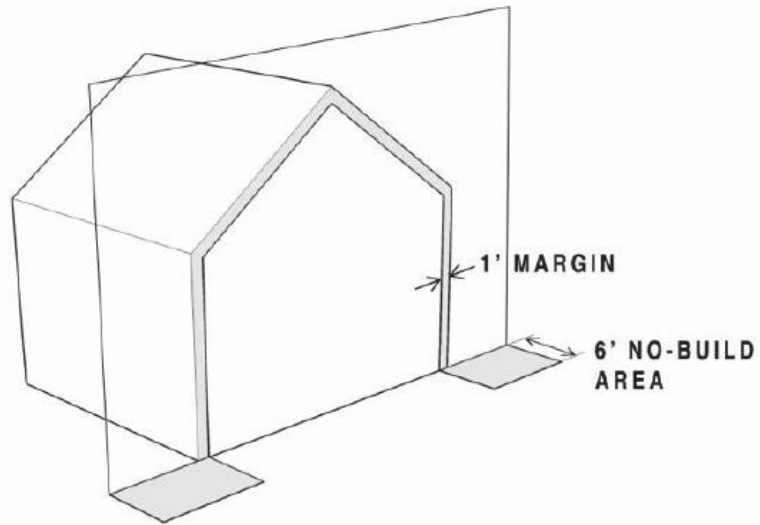
*Example*

Covering or Demolishing 25% of the Wall Area

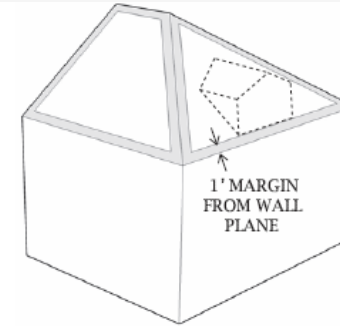
# Demolition Delay By-Law- Partial Demolition



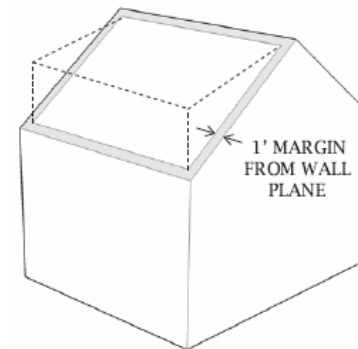
*Example*



Building Within the Margins

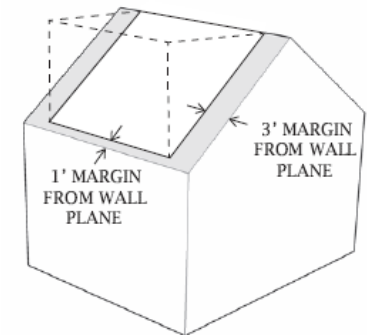


*Hip roof*



*Gable roof*

OR



Greatly Altering the Roofline

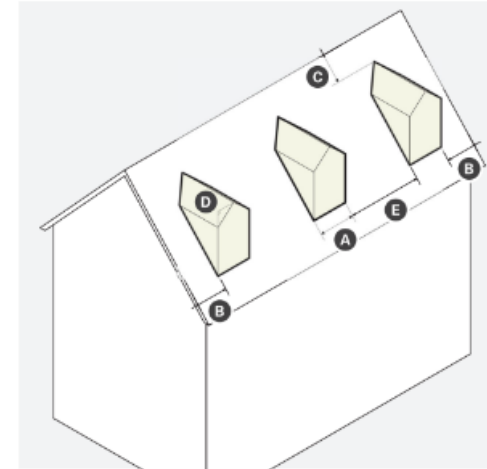
# Form-Based Code

# Form-Based Code- Introduction

A form-based code is a land development regulation that fosters predictable built results and a high-quality public realm by using physical form (rather than separation of uses) as the organizing principle for the code. A form-based code is a regulation, not a mere guideline, adopted into city, town, or county law. A form-based code offers a powerful alternative to conventional zoning regulation. –Form-Based Codes Institute

## k. Gable Dormer

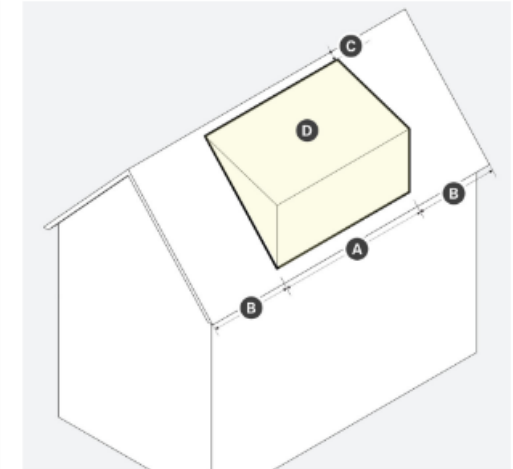
- i. A gable dormer is a window space with a GABLE, HIP, or arched roof that projects perpendicularly from a pitched roof. Dormer windows provide light to the HABITABLE space of a half-STORY.



Dimensions	
A Face Width (max)	window(s) width +18 in
Side Wall SETBACK (min)	—
Roof with eave	0 ft
Roof without eave	1 ft
B Facade & Rear Wall SETBACK (min)	3 ft
C Ridge SETBACK (min)	1 ft
D Dormer Separation (min)	50% of width

## l. Shed Dormer

- i. A shed dormer is a window space with a shed roof that projects perpendicularly from a pitched roof. Shed dormers provide light and additional HABITABLE space to a half-STORY.



Dimensions	
A Face Width (max)	window(s) width +36 in
Side Wall SETBACK (min)	—
Roof with eave	0 ft
Roof without eave	1 ft
B Facade & Rear Wall SETBACK (min)	3 ft
C Ridge SETBACK (min)	1 ft
D Dormer Separation (min)	50% of width

Courtesy of the City of Somerville

# Form-Based Code-Design Standards

- ✓ Streamlines Review Processes
- ✓ Makes Zoning Understandable to Everyone
- ✓ Design Review Process Occurs Before Application is Submitted
- ✓ Allows for Predictable As-Of-Right Development
- ✓ Legally Enforceable
- ✓ Gives the Community More Control Over Design



- a** Build to Line: Buildings are built right up to back of sidewalk with little to no front setback. Pattern is to align buildings with sidewalk not set them back to create a deep front yards or front yard parking. Attached buildings with little to no side yard setbacks.
- b** Ground story is delineated with combination of cornice treatment, change in materials. Ground story height (about 15 feet) is taller than upper floors for attractive retail experience
- c** Consistent four-story scale. Ridge line of roof varies slightly to avoid monolithic volume
- d** Ground floor is about 80% transparent to attract customers
- e** Entrances recessed and flush with ground floor; some stoops (stairs) to upper level residential. Distance between entrances is frequent: around 25 feet
- f** Frontage type is Storefront (commercial on ground floor) with or without awnings
- g** Bulkhead/knee wall forms a base for displays or separates window from sidewalk
- h** Massing is divided into rhythmic 20-foot-wide segments in proportion to shallow sidewalks, reinforcing the pedestrian-scale volumes of Main Street type corridors and avoiding monolithic "warehouse" style facade:

# Form-Based Code- Character Defining Features

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## **Character Defining Features in Brookline Village:**

- Cornices
- Doors and Entryways
- Height
- Materials
- Pedestrian Scaled Spaces
- Roofs
- Storefronts
- Trim and Architectural Details
- Windows



# Form-Based Code- Proposed Design Standard Areas

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## **Architectural Standards-Existing Buildings Focused**

- Additions
- Demolition
- Doors and Doorways
- Porches
- Roofs
- Lighting
- Steps, Stairs and Railings
- Trim and Ornamentation
- Walls and Siding
- Mechanical and Electrical Equipment
- Windows

## **Architectural Standards-Infill Buildings Focused**

- Site Planning and Design
- Height and Scale
- Proportion and Rhythm
- Massing and Volume
- Details and Materials
- Mechanical and Electrical Equipment
- Lighting