

MBTA ZONING TASK FORCE

Question of the Week

"Is it true that there are no limits on density in the proposed new MBTA Zoning bylaw?"



ANSWER:

No. This is a misconception. There are very specific zoning regulations that limit the number of units that can be built on any site within any of the proposed overlay districts. The purpose of these controls is to limit development and maintain the scale of the neighborhood.

Other than the Beaver Dam Rd district in the LCD, the number of allowed units is controlled by the size of the lot, with a maximum of one unit for each 2,000 square feet of lot area. This means that a quarter acre lot (or 10,000 square feet) could have no more than five multifamily units. The Districts near the downtown include many lots that are smaller than this, and some of the larger lots already have apartment buildings. There are also limits on height, setbacks from property lines and lot coverage ratios that limit the size of new buildings.

In some districts, including in the Beaver Dam District, there is a specified maximum number of units that can be built on any lot, regardless of the lot size.