



# Amherst Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code Project

## Public Briefing

# Agenda

- Introduction
- Project Organization
- Project Overview and Schedule
- Comments and Questions

# Work Flow



# Project Working Committee

- Contractual Requirement
- Sub-Committee of the Planning Board
- Appointed by the Planning Board Chair
- Guides Plan and Code Drafting

# Project Technical Advisory Committee

- Composed of Technical Staff and Regional Agency Representatives
- Ensures Plan and Code Implementation

# PLANNING & ZONING CODE REVISIONS

## TOWN OF AMHERST, NEW YORK



# TODAY'S PRESENTATION



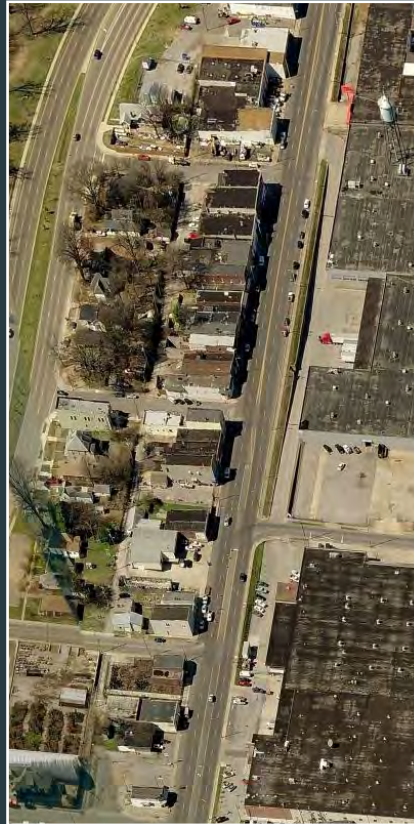
- Code Studio Experience
- Team Introduction
- Project Work Plan
- Project Schedule
- Public Outreach
- Food for Thought

March 09, 2016

# 1 CODE STUDIO EXPERIENCE

**WE HELP CREATE WALKABLE, MIXED USE PLACES**

from start to finish, from concept through implementation...



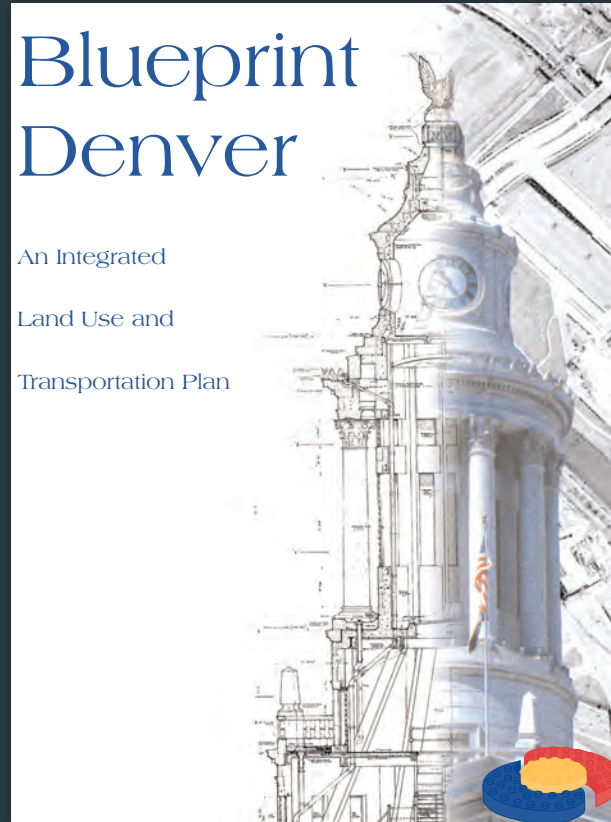
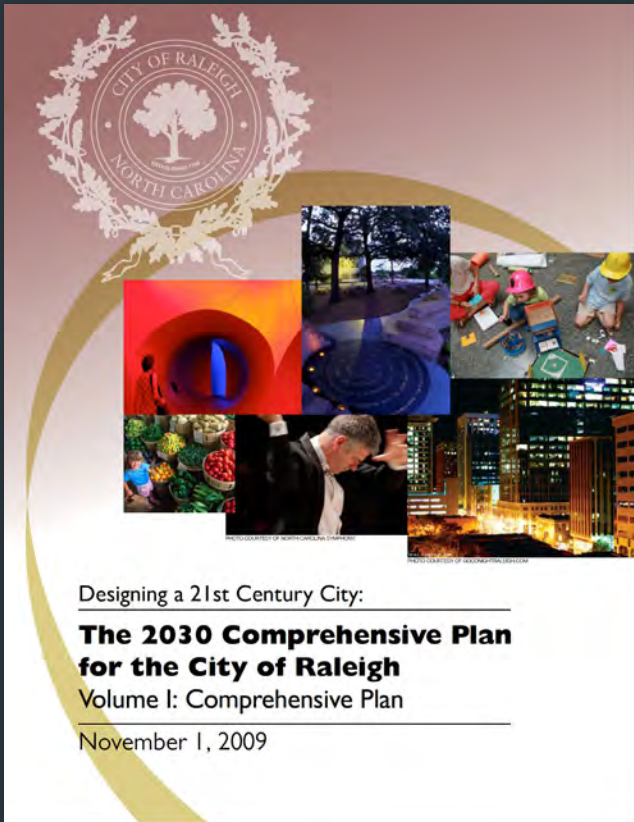
Code Studio has managed successful planning and code drafting projects that focus on incremental infill as well as transformational change. Our codes in **SIMSBURY, HATTIESBURG, TUSCALOOSA & MALTA** have “shined the spotlight” and fostered redevelopment in our project areas.



# 2 | CODE STUDIO EXPERIENCE

## WE IMPLEMENT VISIONARY PLANS

moving planning policy from imagination to implementation...



We have been the “coder of choice” for some of the most significant plans recently adopted, including **BLUEPRINT DENVER, FORWARD DALLAS!, RALEIGH 2030 & PLAN CINCINNATI.**

# 3 | CODE STUDIO EXPERIENCE

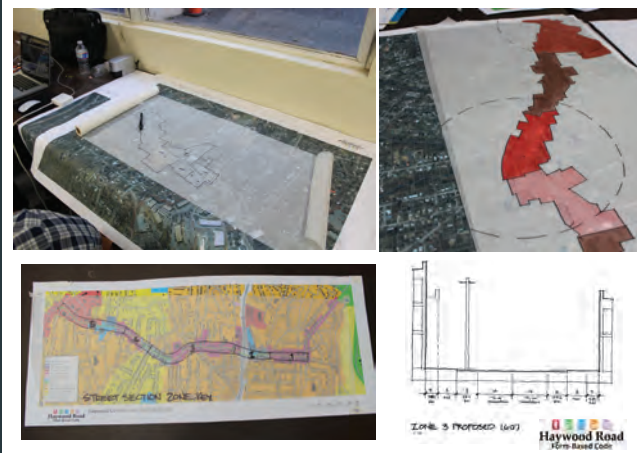
## WE PLAN AND DESIGN GREAT PLACES

and code the site specific details successfully.....

### STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS



### INITIAL CONCEPTS



### FINAL PRODUCTION



We regularly work on small area planning and form-based code projects, including recent work in **ASHEVILLE, TETON VALLEY, BINGHAMTON, ITHACA & KNOXVILLE.**

# 4 | CODE STUDIO EXPERIENCE

**WE SUCCESSFULLY EDUCATE AND FACILITATE**

to generate community “buy-in” that helps simplify the adoption process...



Our skills in explaining complex concepts to the public in ways that everyday citizens and elected officials can grasp has been honed through our work across the country, including recent work in **CHAPEL HILL, TUSCALOOSA & ROSWELL.**


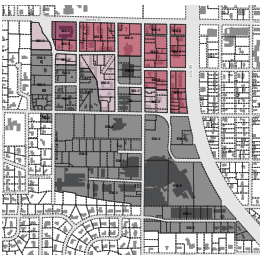
# 5 | CODE STUDIO EXPERIENCE

**WE PRODUCE USER-FRIENDLY & ELEGANT DOCUMENTS**  
that broadcast each community's intentions...

DISTRICTS | Sec. 2.3. Mixed Use Districts (MX-3, -4, -5)

### Sec. 2.3. Mixed Use Districts (MX-3, -4, -5)

The MX- Districts are intended to accommodate a mix of compatible commercial, employment and higher-density residential in a pedestrian-friendly and walkable environment.


**A. Permitted Building Types**

- Mixed Use Building
- Shopfront Building
- General Building
- Civic Building
- Apartment
- Apartment Court
- Stacked Flat
- Townhouse
- Garden Apartment
- Collage Court
- Detached House

**B. Permitted Building Heights**

**MX-3:** 3 stories / 45 feet  
**MX-4:** 4 stories / 55 feet  
**MX-5:** 5 stories / 67 feet

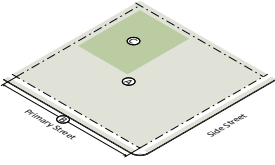
4 | DRAFT Form-Based Code Midtown Hattiesburg | October 09, 2012



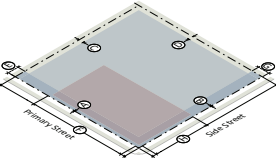
BUILDING TYPES | Sec. 3.3. Mixed Use Building

### Sec. 3.3. Mixed Use Building

**1. Lot**




**2. Placement**



Lot Dimensions	
ⓐ Lot area (min)	5,000 SF
ⓑ Lot width (min)	50'
Lot Parameters	
ⓐ % of outdoor amenity space (min)	20%

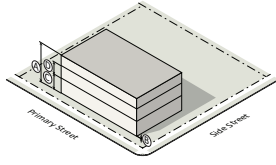
Building Setbacks	
ⓐ Primary street (min)	0'
ⓑ Side street (min)	0'
ⓒ Side interior (min)	0' or 5'
ⓓ Side interior, abutting protected district, RA-3 or RD-2 (min)	10'
ⓔ Rear (min)	0' or 5'
ⓕ Rear, abutting protected district, RA-3 or RD-2 (min)	20'
ⓖ Rear, alley (min)	5'
Build-to Zone (BTZ)	
ⓐ Primary street (min/max)	0' to 10'
ⓑ Building in primary street BTZ (min % of lot width)	70%
ⓒ Side street (min/max)	0' to 10'
ⓓ Building in side street BTZ (min % of lot width)	35%
Parking Location	
ⓐ On-site parking not allowed between the building & the street	

12 | DRAFT Form-Based Code Midtown Hattiesburg | October 09, 2012



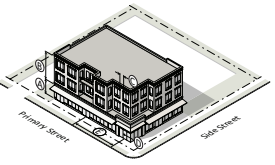
Sec. 3.3. Mixed Use Building | BUILDING TYPES

**3. Height**




Building Height	
ⓐ Building height (max)	
MX-3	3 stories / 45'
MX-4	4 stories / 55'
MX-5	5 stories / 67'
Reduced height may be required when abutting a protected district (see Sec. 3.16.0)	
Building height (min)	2 stories
Story Height	
ⓐ Ground floor elevation	0'
ⓑ Ground story height, floor to ceiling (min)	13'
ⓒ Upper story height, floor to ceiling (min)	9'

**4. Activation**



Transparency	
ⓐ Ground story (min)	60%
ⓑ Upper story (min)	20%
ⓒ Blank wall area (max)	30'
Pedestrian Access	
ⓐ Entrance facing primary street	Required
ⓑ Entrance spacing along primary street (max)	75'
Permitted Building Elements	
Porch	No
Stoop	No
Balcony	Yes
Galley	Yes
Awning/Canopy	Yes
Forecourt	Yes

October 09, 2012 | Form-Based Code Midtown Hattiesburg DRAFT | 13



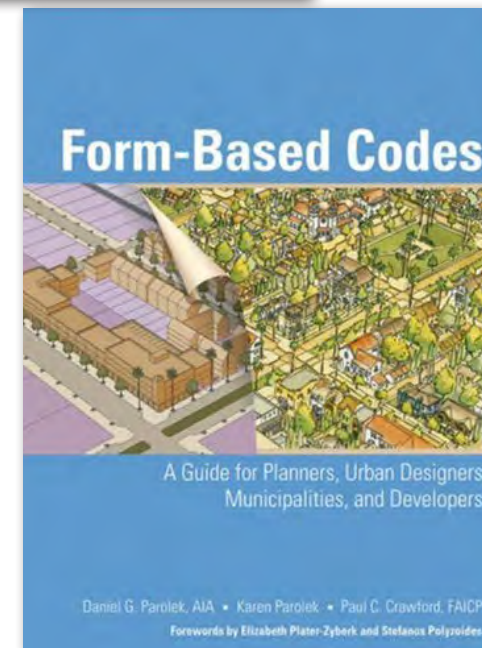
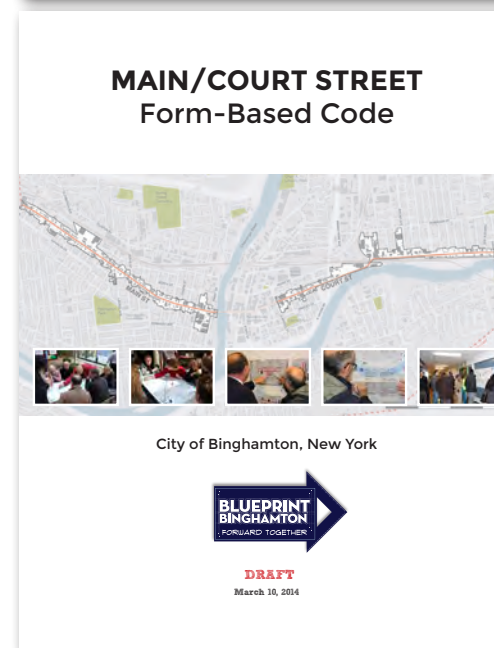
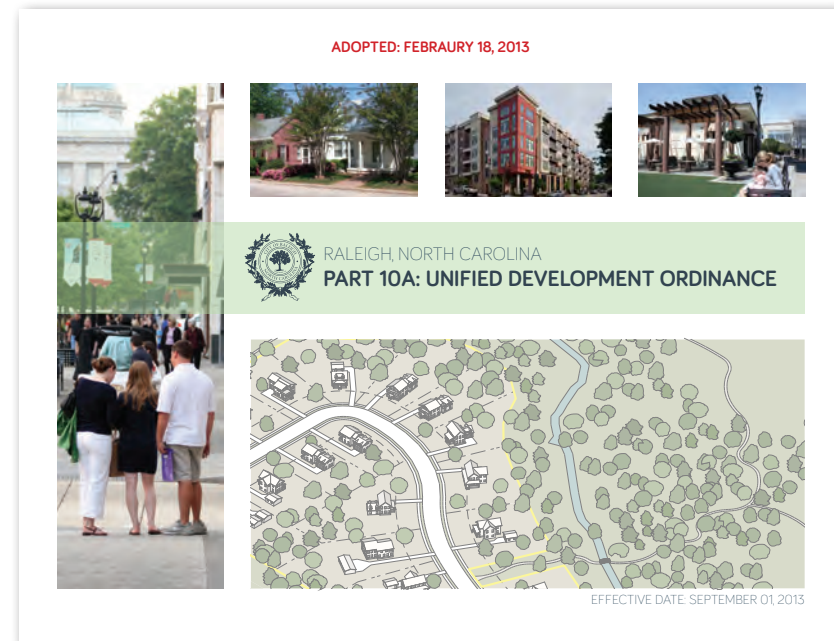
# 6 CODE STUDIO EXPERIENCE

## City-Wide Codes:

- + Los Angeles - Zoning Code Update
- + Denver CO - Zoning Code Update
- + Roswell GA - Unified Development Code
- + Raleigh NC - Unified Development Ordinance
- + Cincinnati OH - Land Development Code
- + Buffalo NY - Green Code

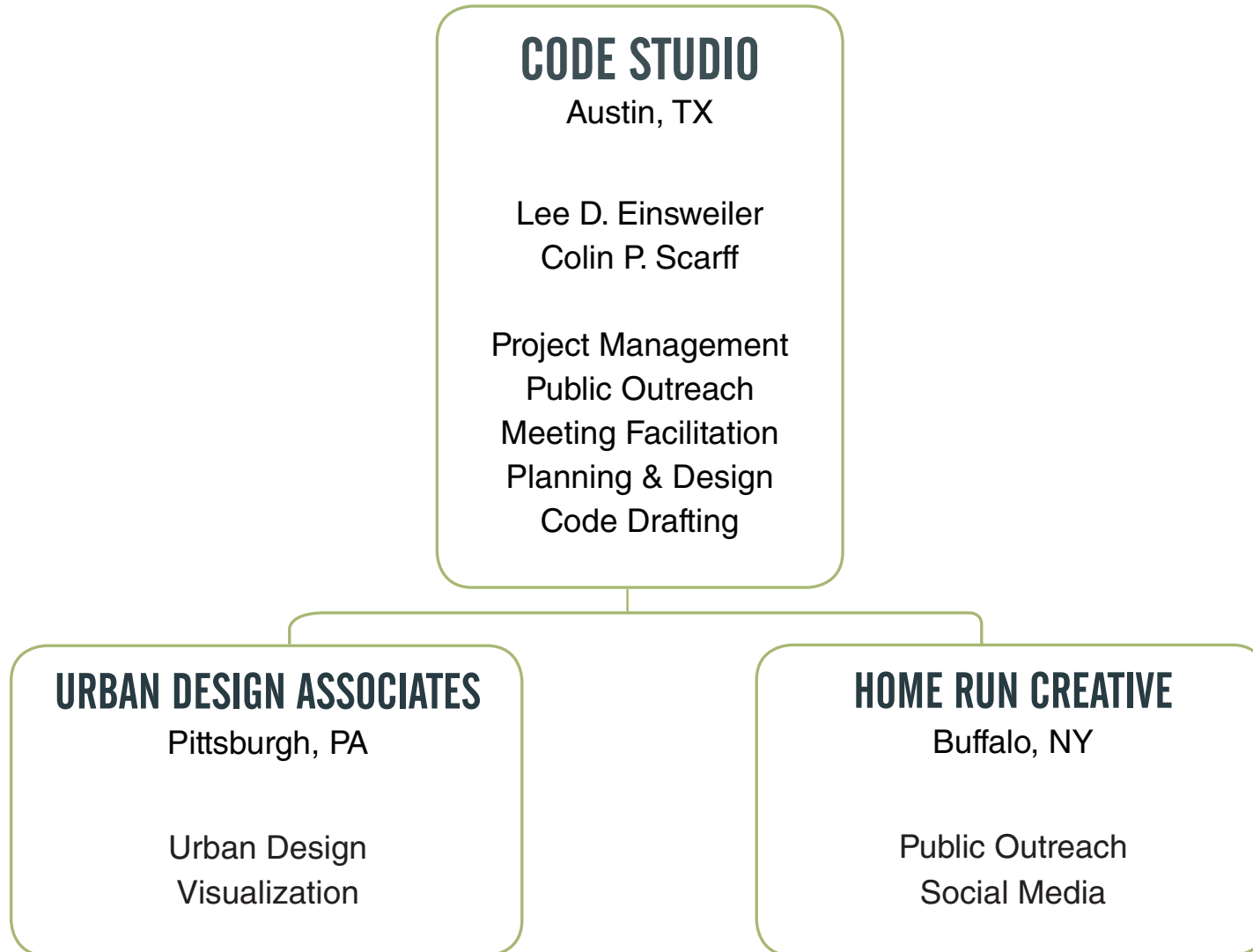
## Small Area Codes:

- + Chattanooga TN - Downtown (5 neighborhoods)
- + Town of Malta NY - Downtown
- + Binghamton NY - Main Street/Court Street
- + Ithaca NY - Collegetown
- + Virginia Beach VA - Oceanfront Resort Area
- + Chapel Hill NC - Ephesus Church/Fordham
- + Asheville NC - Haywood Road, River Arts District



# 7 TEAM INTRODUCTION

## PROJECT PARTNERS



# 8 PROJECT WORK PLAN

## KEY DELIVERABLES

### Technical Amendments to Zoning

- + Reformat, Organize, Improve Usability

### Comprehensive Plan Amendment

- + Proposed Centers/Corridors Text Amendment + Map

### Zoning Ordinance Amendment

- + Tools to Implement the Proposed Plan Amendment
- + Proposed Text and Changes to Zoning Map
  
- + Amendments Must be Review by Planning Board and Approved by Town Board

# 9 PROJECT WORK PLAN

## MAJOR STEPS

### Project Initiation

- + Site Tour
- + Stakeholder Listening Sessions, Focus Groups, Working Committee
- + Public Briefing

### Analysis

- + Critique of Existing Regulations (including staff issues)
- + Review of Comprehensive Plan - Centers Issues
- + Review of Existing Commercial Centers
- + Organization, Outline of New Code
- + Confirmation of Direction (Town Board)

### Develop Plan Amendment Concepts

- + Activity Center Report
- + Public Participation Design Charrette



# 10 PROJECT WORK PLAN (CONT.)

## MAJOR STEPS

### Draft Plan Amendment

- + Draft Plan Amendment
- + Centers + Corridors Plan Map
- + Staff, Committee Review

### Draft Zoning Amendment

- + Reorganize, Reformat, Illustrate Existing Provisions
- + Technical Revisions Identified in Critique, by Staff
- + New Zoning for Centers + Corridors
- + Legal Review
- + Adoption-Ready Draft Plan Amendment and Zoning

### Adoption, Training

- + Public Workshops, Hearings by Town Board
- + Plan + Zoning Training, Community Forum

# 11 PROJECT SCHEDULE

## THROUGH PRESENTATION FOR ADOPTION

Overall: 14 Months to Draft Plan + Zoning Amendment Ready for Adoption

- + Project Initiation and Analysis: 6 months
- + Develop Plan Amendment Concepts: 3 months
- + Draft Plan Amendment + Zoning Amendment: 5 months
- + Adoption: Determined by Town Board

# 12 PUBLIC OUTREACH

How can Amherst undertake this project without generating mass hysteria?



- + PREPARE
- + ENGAGE
- + EDUCATE
- + TRANSPARENCY
- + IMMEDIACY
- + COLLABORATE
- + EMPOWER

# 13 PUBLIC OUTREACH

## ENGAGEMENT/METHODS

### Primary Outreach:

- + Listening Sessions, Focus Groups
- + Public Briefings, Workshops, Open Houses
- + Hands-On Public Participation Design Charrette

### Secondary Outreach:

- + Project Web Site [imagineamherst.com](http://imagineamherst.com)
- + Social Media (Facebook, Twitter)
- + Direct Mail, Email Blasts, Newsletters
- + Speakers Available Upon Request, Booth at Events
- + Hard Copies at Town Hall, Branch Libraries

### Audiences:

- + **INTERNAL:** Town Hall - staff, working committee, elected/appointed officials
- + **EXTERNAL:** Neighborhoods, property owners, business interests, developers, design professionals
- + **MEDIA:** TV, radio, traditional print, bloggers



# 14 FOOD FOR THOUGHT

## THINKING ABOUT NEW ZONES

### Questions To Ponder:

- + Are Existing Development Patterns Worth Perpetuating?
- + Do We Have Plans to Transform Existing Sites/Areas?
- + What Does the Market Want to Produce in These Places?
- + What is the Community Vision for the Quality of Development?
- + Can the Market be Accommodated Within this Community Vision?

### Are We Regulating the Right Things?

- + Key Elements of Urban Design vs. Formula Development
- + Neighborhood Compatibility and Transitions

### Are We Enhancing Sites at the Right Time?

- + Change in Use? Modest Addition? What Are Your Triggers?
- + Modest Improvements Often Cannot Pay For Complete Site Retrofit
- + Especially Drainage Improvements



# 15 FOOD FOR THOUGHT

## THE RIGHT APPROACH?

### Existing Regulations:

- + Reformat, Reorganize, Illustrate, Ease-of-Use Improvements
- + Staff-Identified Technical Revisions

### Mixed Use/Activity Centers:

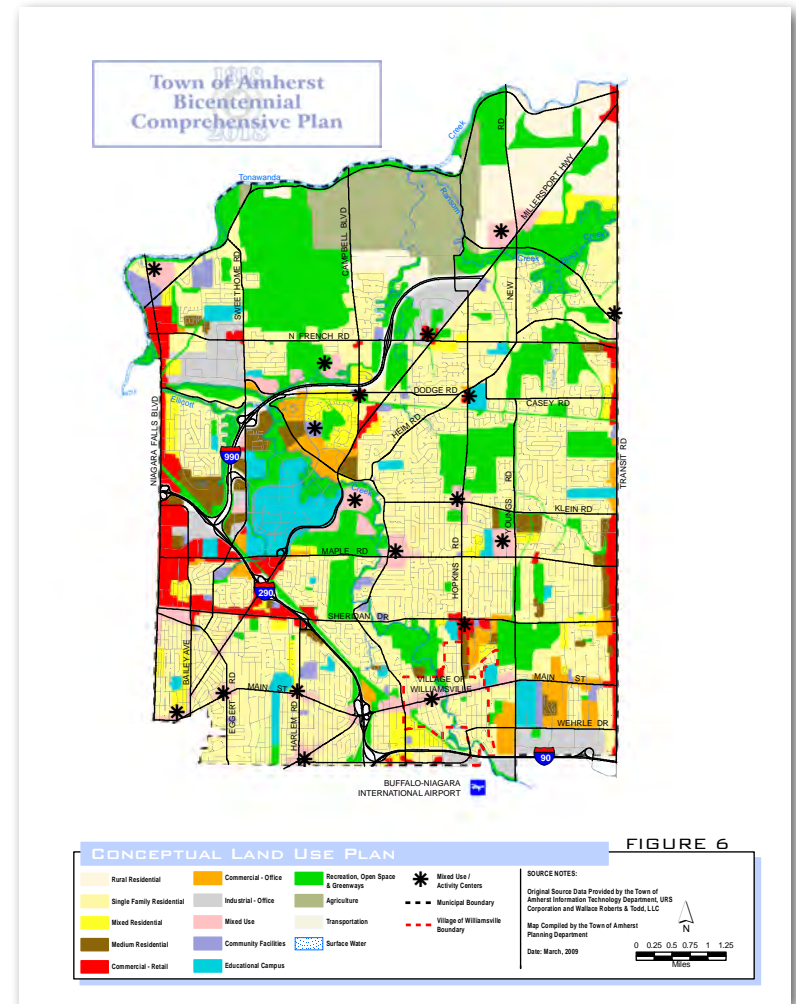
- + Plan Refinement - Definition, Categorization of Centers, Logical Hierarchy
- + Level of Change: Complete Transformation? Revitalization/Infill?
- + Alternatives to General Business (GB) District
- + Focus on Market Reality, Rules That Don't Require Variances!

### Transitions:

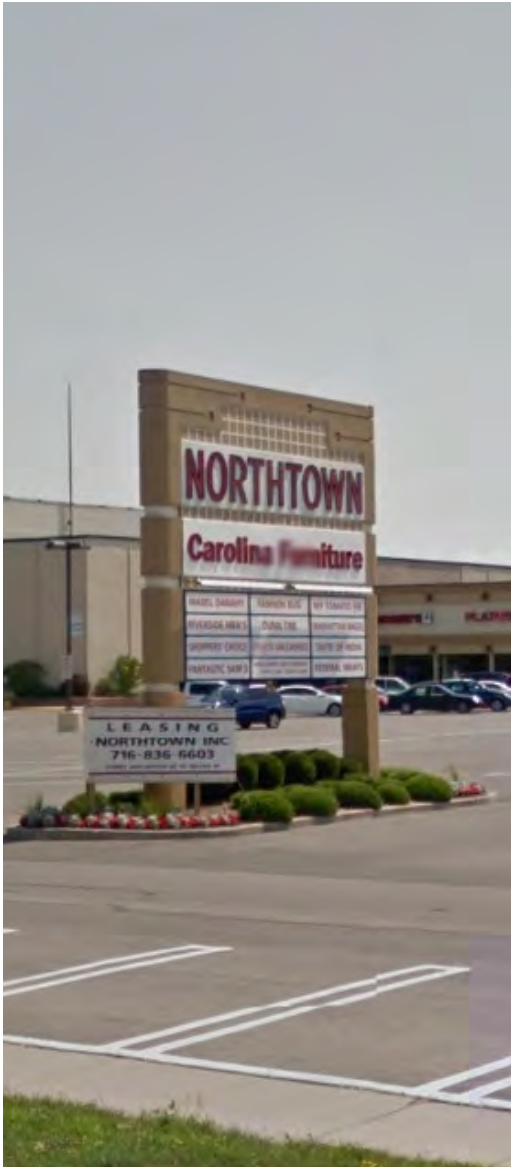
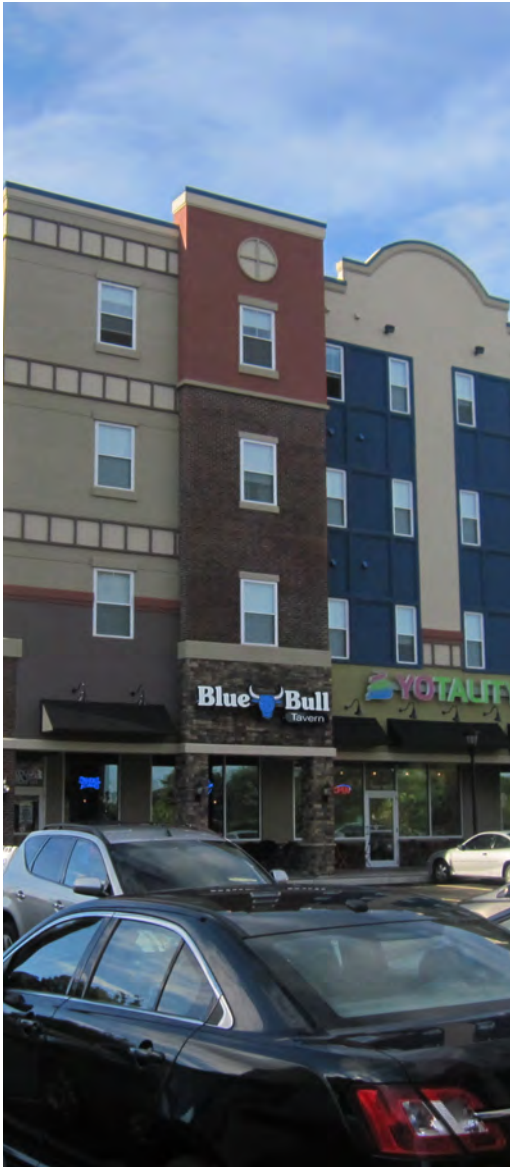
- + From Residential Areas to Centers and Corridors

### Code Testing/Target Areas:

- + Ends of the Spectrum? Neighborhood Center > Regional Center?
- + Set Development Standards That Match Context (signs, landscaping)
- + Create a Toolkit for Future Small Area Plans and Rezoning



# 16 CURRENT CENTER ZONING



**HOPKINS DODGE PLAZA (NB)**

**EGGERTSVILLE (GB-TNB-1)**

**UNIVERSITY PLACE (GB)**

**NORTHTOWN PLAZA (SC)**

March 09, 2016

# 17 FOOD FOR THOUGHT

## THE RIGHT APPROACH?

### Ask These Questions First:

- + Are the Existing Uses Acceptable?
- + Are the Existing Development Patterns Desirable?

### If So, Then:

- + Code for the Existing Uses and Patterns
- + Allow for Expansion of Permitted Uses
- + Allow for Improvement of Structures

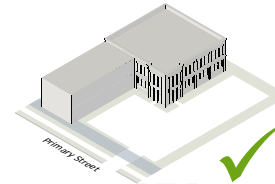
### If Not, Then:

- + Code for the Planned Future Uses and Patterns
- + Allow for Phased Development

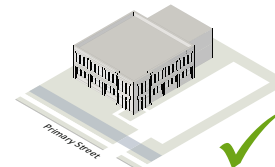
E. Nonconforming Build-to Requirement. The nonconforming provisions of the Land Use Management Ordinance apply to this Section. The following standards clarify the application of the Land Use Management Ordinance nonconforming provisions to the build-to zone requirements of this Section. Expansion of an existing building is required to meet the build-to zone requirements, except as permitted in the following situations.

1. Additions. Expansion of an existing building which is unable to meet the build-to requirement of this Section must comply with the following nonconforming provisions:

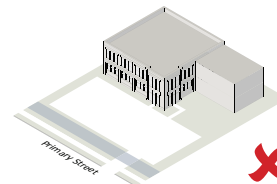
a. Front: Addition. Any addition to the front must be placed in the build-to zone. The addition does not have to meet the build-to zone percentage for the lot.



b. Rear: Addition. Rear additions are permitted. The intent is to ensure a building addition does not increase the degree on the nonconformity in relation to the build-to zone.

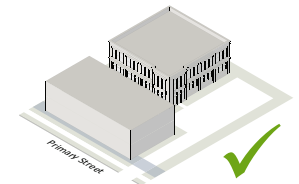


c. Side: Addition. Side additions are not permitted.

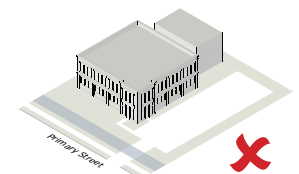


2. New Buildings. Where a new building is being constructed on a lot or site with an existing building on it that doesn't meet the build-to requirement, the following nonconforming provisions apply.

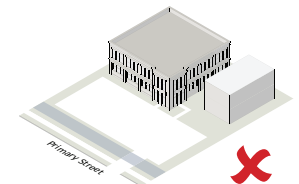
a. Front: New Building. All new buildings must be placed in the build-to zone until the build-to zone percentage for the lot has been met.



b. Rear: New Building. New buildings located outside of the build-to zone are not permitted until the build-to zone percentage for the lot has been met.



c. Side: New Building. New buildings located outside of the build-to zone are not permitted until the build-to zone percentage for the lot has been met.





# 18 FOOD FOR THOUGHT

## LEVEL OF DETAIL FOR AREA PLANNING

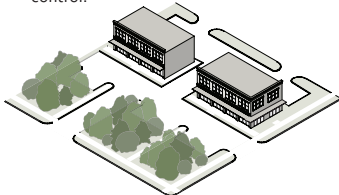
### Level of Detail Needed:

- + **Streets and Blocks**: New and existing streets, bike and pedestrian connections, hierarchy of street types
- + **Land Use**: Key retail/transit streets, areas for special treatment or form
- + **Building Height**: In stories (minimum as well?), neighborhood height transitions
- + **Building/Parking Placement**: Location of buildings - “built-to” or set back, street wall (“main street”), parking between building and street, on-street

### Article 3.4. Frontage Requirements

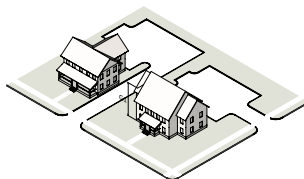
#### Sec. 3.4.1. Purpose and Intent

Frontages link a desired development pattern with specific form requirements that mandate the type of development desired along the street edge. Frontages place different requirements from the base dimensional standards. Where there is a conflict between the base dimensional standards and the frontage requirements, the frontage requirements control.



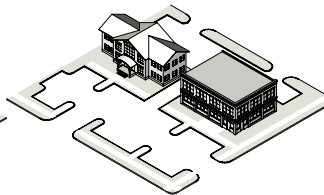
**A. Parkway (-PK)**

The -PK Frontage is intended to provide a heavily landscaped buffer between the roadway and adjacent development to ensure a continuous green corridor along the street right-of-way.



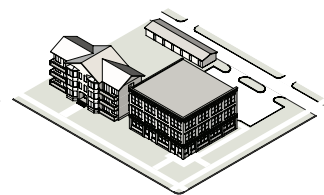
**B. Detached (-DE)**

The -DE Frontage is intended for areas adjacent to roadways transitioning from residential to commercial. Accommodates neighborhood-scaled, low intensity commercial uses while maintaining the residential character of the street right-of-way.



**C. Parking Limited (-PL)**

The -PL Frontage is intended for areas where access to buildings by automobile is desired but where some level of walkability is maintained. Permits a maximum of two bays of on-site parking with a single drive aisle between the building and the street right-of-way.



**D. Green (-GR)**

The -GR Frontage is intended for areas where it is desirable to locate buildings close to the street, but where parking between the building and street is not permitted. Requires a landscaped area between the building and the street right-of-way.

# 19 SUCCESSFUL OUTCOMES

## PAST EXPERIENCE

### Denver Returns to Main Street:

- + Auto-Oriented Development Replaced
- + Walkable Urbanism Can Be Achieved . . .



Before



Before



After



After

March 09, 2016