

MEETING REPORT NO. 22

PROJECT: **Town of Needham Downtown Study**

DATE: 13 November 2007

LOCATION: Needham Public Library

PRESENT: Downtown Study Committee (DSC)

Kate Fitzpatrick
Paul Good
John J. McQuillan
Jack Cogswell
Bob Smart
Moe Handel
Lee Newman
Mark Gluesing
Jerry Wasserman
Jean McKnight
Joyce Moss
Alexandra Clee
Kathy Lewis

DiNisco Design Partnership (DDP)

Kenneth DiNisco

1. PURPOSE

1.1. The purpose of the meeting was to review build out options prepared by DiNisco Design for the Center District with specific consideration of the Town Hall/ Common area.

2. OPTIONS

2.1. Ken DiNisco presented three options (two sheets/ option) plus a short descriptive narrative. Option 1, 2 and 3 are shown as attachments.

3. RELATED ISSUES/ CASE STUDIES

Ken DiNisco briefly discussed:

3.1. An e-mail from Peter Friedenberg who was not able to be present (e-mail attached).

3.2. An e-mail suggestion from Mark Gluesing concerning development of Linden Street Wellesley at the former Diehl site. Photographs of newly constructed building (2 & 1 height) were distributed for discussion.

4. SUGGESTIONS

The discussion created two additional alternative approaches to option 1, 2 and 3.

4.1. One alternative (called option 4) was to keep a full three story limit in and around town hall/ common (Highland Avenue and Chappell Street).

- 4.2. A second suggestion was to modify option 3 by establishing specific dimension for the 3 & 1 setback along Great Plain Avenue measured from Great Plain to alley behind the bank at Highland/ Great Plain which measures 75 feet.
- 4.3. A further recommendation for all options was to reduce setbacks on both sides of Great Plain from the railroad tracks west. This suggestion was adopted for all three options.

5. DISCUSSION

- 5.1. After extensive discussion, it was agreed to vote on each option as noted below:

	<u>First Vote</u>	<u>Second Vote</u>
Option 1 -	2	0
Option 2 -	3	3
Option 3	6	6
Option 4	4	4

- 5.2 The selected option was Option 3 described as follows:
- Setback 2 & 1 on both sides of Great Plain, west of the railroad tracks.
 - Setback of 3 & 1 on both sides of Great Plain on the north side of Great Plain east of the railroad tracks.
 - The northside of Great Plain will have (3 & 1) setback measured 75 feet from the street.
 - The balance of the Center District north will have a 2 & 1 setback.
 - Drawings showing this setback described as Option 4 are attached.

6. OTHER ISSUES

- 6.1 One issue resulting in extensive discussion focused on the necessity of a parking structure especially in the center district. Development alternatives include, private, public or private/ public initiatives. Other suggestions were the creation of a development tax for funding of a parking structure or for town to donate land for a private structure.
- 6.2 A second issue was concern with setbacks abutting residential districts and where the setback is measured from.
- 6.3 Both of these issues will be discussed at future meetings.

7. NEXT MEETING

- 7.1 The next meeting of the DSC is scheduled for **Monday December 3, 2007** at **7:45 AM**. Location to be determined.

8. AGENDA

- 1) Concept Plan
- 2) Public Forum preparation.

The discussions of this meeting are recorded as understood by the writer. Please advise the writer of any omissions or corrections.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "K. Mingo". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Kenneth F. DiNisco AIA
DiNISCO DESIGN

KFD/ jc

cc: DSC
Richard Rice
Jon Oxman

Attachments: Options 1, 2, 3
Option 4
Narrative re: option 1, 2, 3

OPTION 1

Entire district is a 3+1 setback. This was the point of departure “following the buildout presentation to the Committee with Judi Barrett and Beta Group on 08/0807.

Advantages: Maximum buildout and economic advantages for developers.

Disadvantages: Concern about the density in and around the town hall that has been expressed by some Committee members, town officials and citizens.

OPTION 2

North side of Great Plain Avenue is a 2+1 setback zone. South side of Great Plain Avenue is a 3+1 setback zone.

Advantages: Lower building heights are more respectful of the Town Hall.
Potential for greater community support.

Disadvantages: Reduced economic development potential in the 2+1 setback zone.

OPTION 3

The 2+1 setback zone begins at the town hall and continues north. The 3+1 setback zone begins at the corners of Great Plain Avenue and continues south.

Advantages: Strengthens the definition of Great Plain Avenue with a consistent 3+1 setback on both sides of the street.

Disadvantages: The difficulty with this option is deciding where to stop the 3+1 setback zone. It has inherent visual/aesthetic issues by changing heights at the corners of Great Plain Avenue at Highland and Chapell.

EVALUATION

- Option 1 Provides a consistent setback for the entire Center District at 3+1. The concern is that the density adjacent to town hall will be detrimental to the civic focus of town hall and common.
- Option 2 This option is clear and consistent from a development point of view, and aesthetics of town hall and common. The greatest immediate development potential is from Great Plain Avenue to Chestnut Street and the 3+1 density makes sense in this regard.
- Option 3 This option presents a strong definition on both sides of Great Plain Avenue, but also has problems in the transition from 3+1 to 2+1. This problem does not have an easy solution.

RECOMMENDATION

- Option 2 This option satisfies the greatest number of concerns with the fewest negatives. It shows a consistent 2+1 density around town hall while maintaining a strong street edge and village atmosphere. It also avoids the perception that this density will overwhelm town hall. This option also facilitates the most likely immediate development of Chestnut Street District which should logically extend to Great Plain Avenue.

Any concerns that this option “under develops” the Center District can be presented at future town meetings to increase the density to 3+1. It is totally another matter to “over develop” the Center District and attempt to correct this by downsizing the density after the fact.

**Buildout/Setback
Option 4**

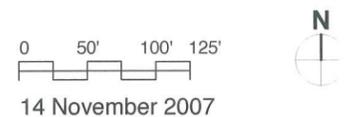


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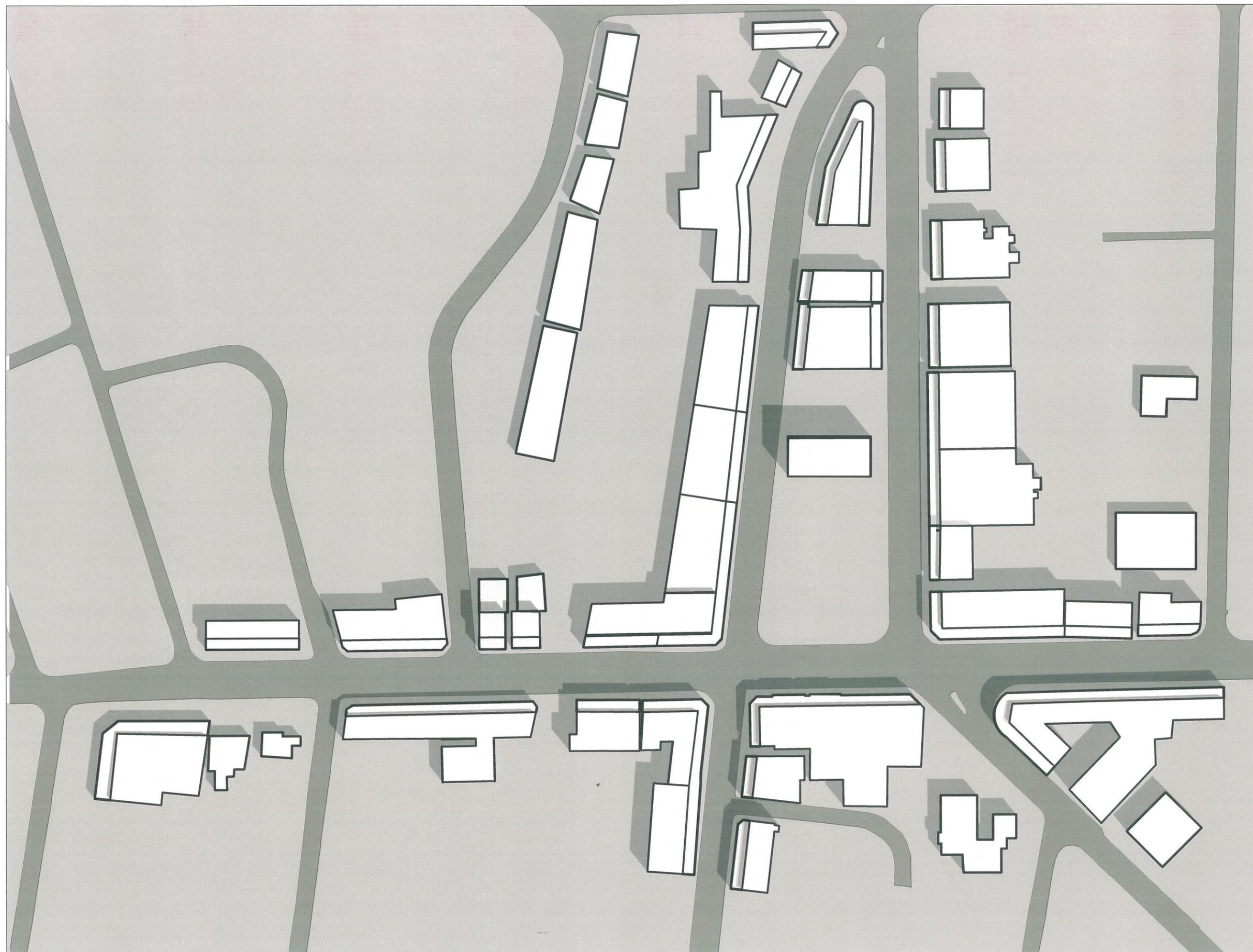
-  2 + 1 SETBACK
-  3 + 1 SETBACK

4.1

Partial Site Plan
(w/Property Lines)



**Buildout/Setback
Option 4**



4.2

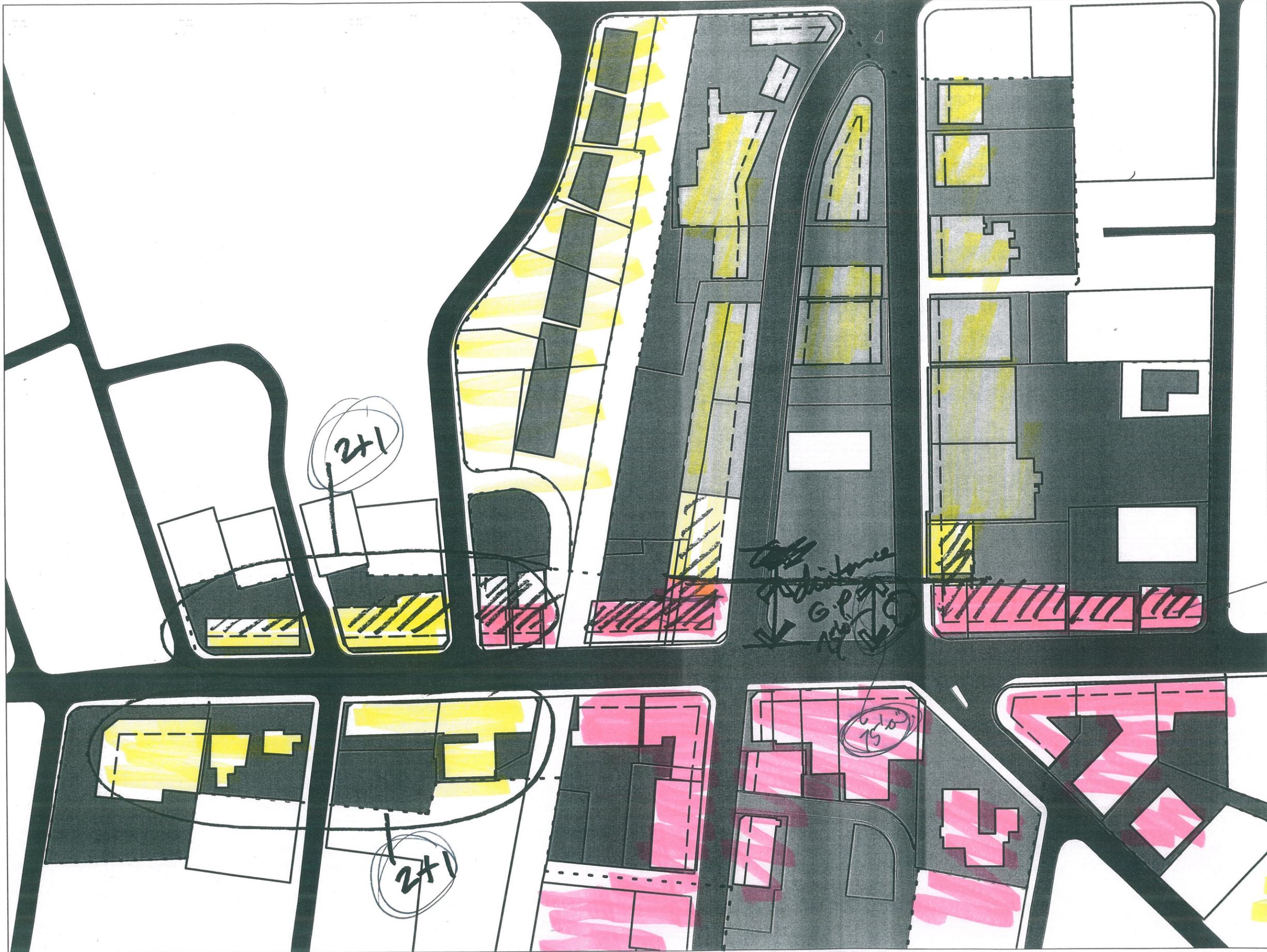
Partial Site Plan
(w/Shadows)

0 50' 100' 125'



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**Buildout/Setback
Option 3**



Strus
3 @ T.H.

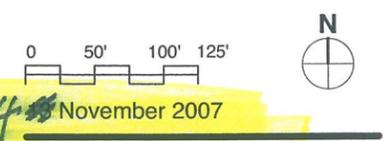
3+1 Beyond
Option 4

GA

3+1

- Legend:
- 2 + 1 SETBACK
 - 3 + 1 SETBACK

3.1
Partial Site Plan
(w/Property Lines)



**Buildout/Setback
Option 1**

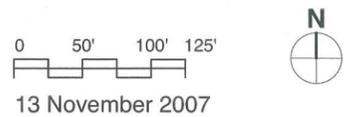


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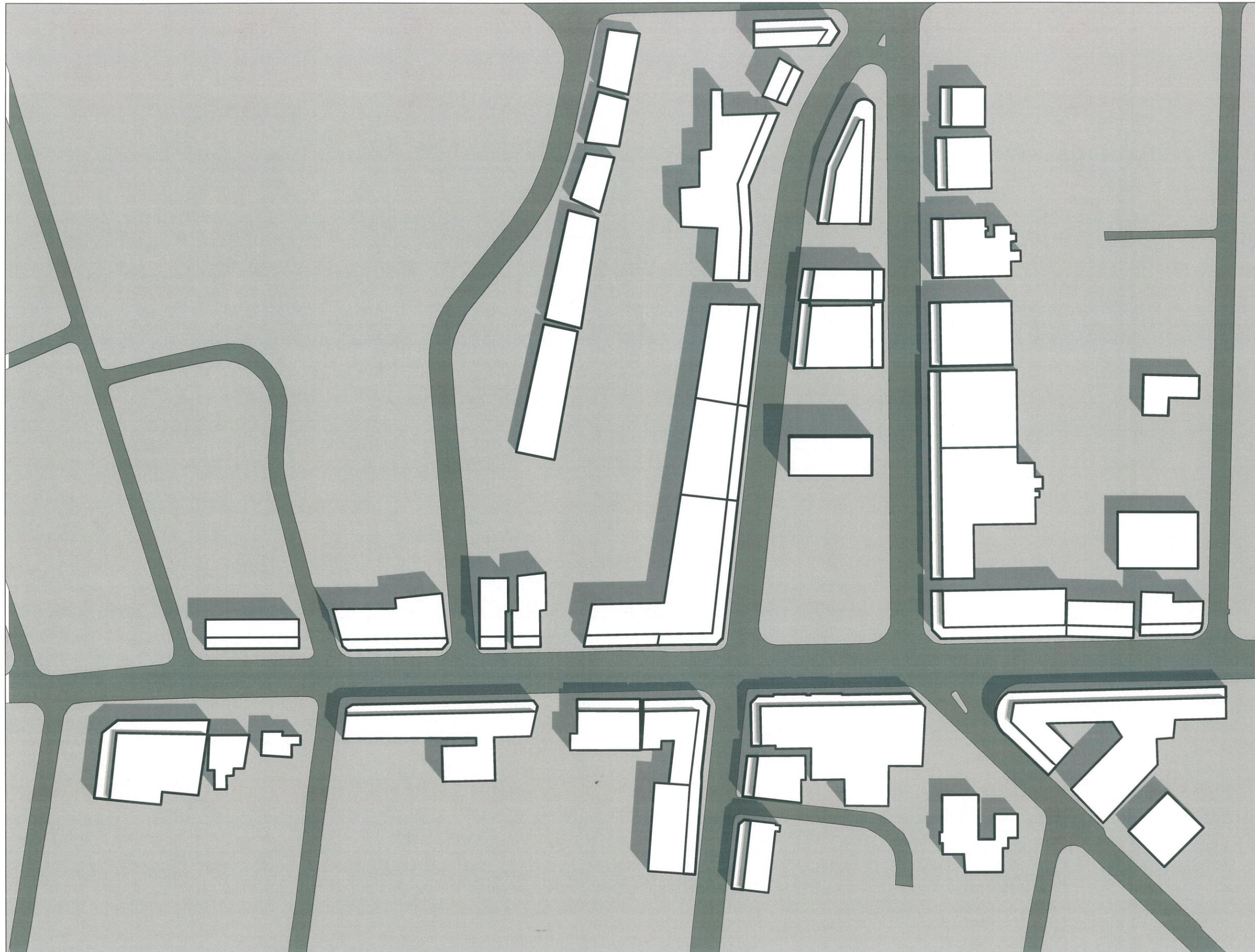
- 2 + 1 SETBACK
- 3 + 1 SETBACK

1.1

Partial Site Plan
(w/Property Lines)

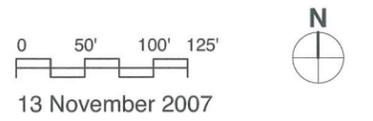


**Buildout/Setback
Option 1**



1.2

Partial Site Plan
(w/Shadows)



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**Buildout/Setback
Option 2**



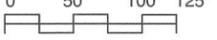
Legend:

-  2 + 1 SETBACK
-  3 + 1 SETBACK

2.1

Partial Site Plan
(w/Property Lines)

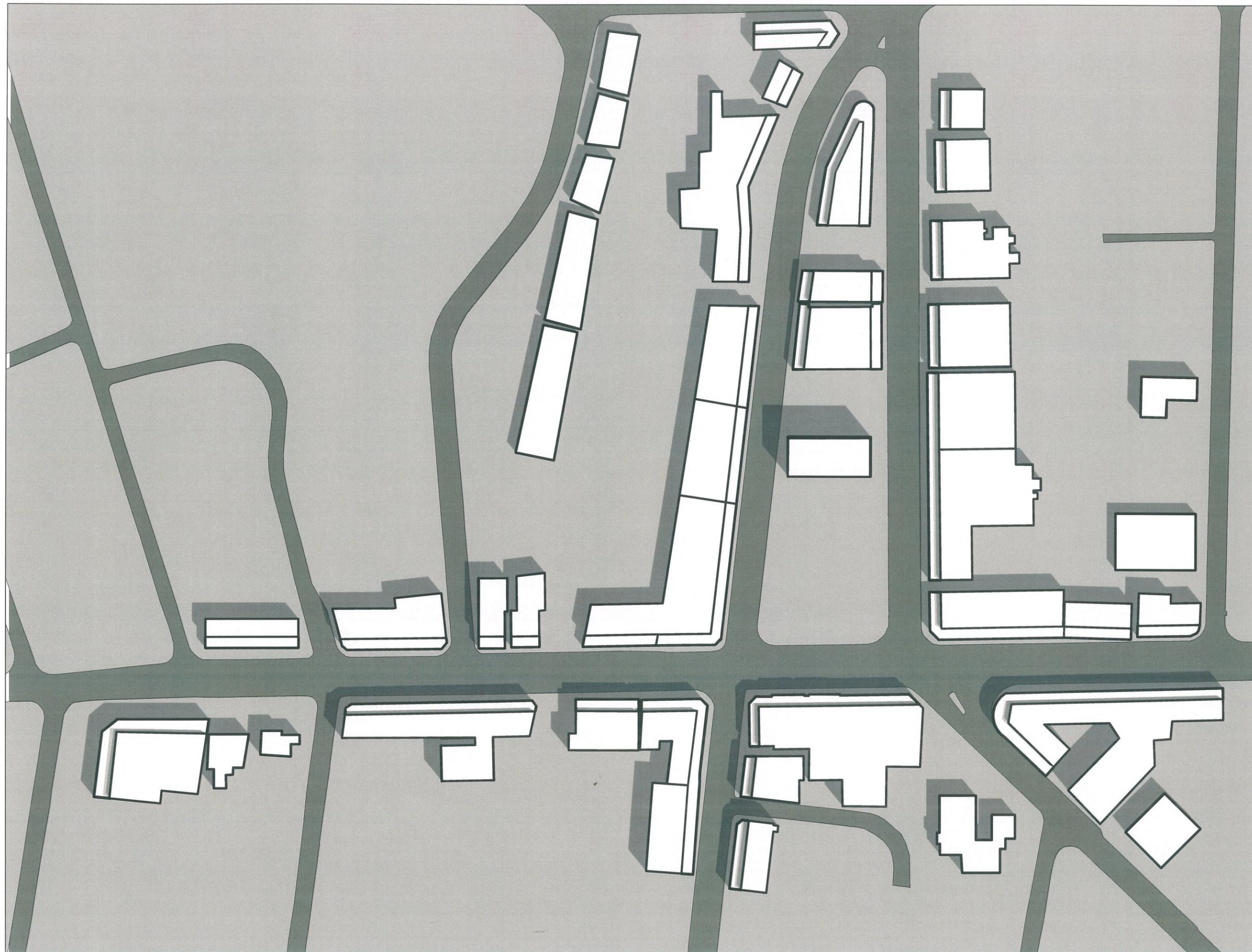
0 50' 100' 125'



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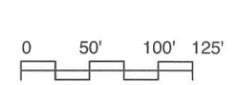


**Buildout/Setback
Option 2**



2.2

Partial Site Plan
(w/Shadows)



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**Buildout/Setback
Option 3**

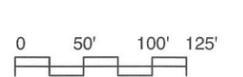


Legend:

-  2 + 1 SETBACK
-  3 + 1 SETBACK

3.1

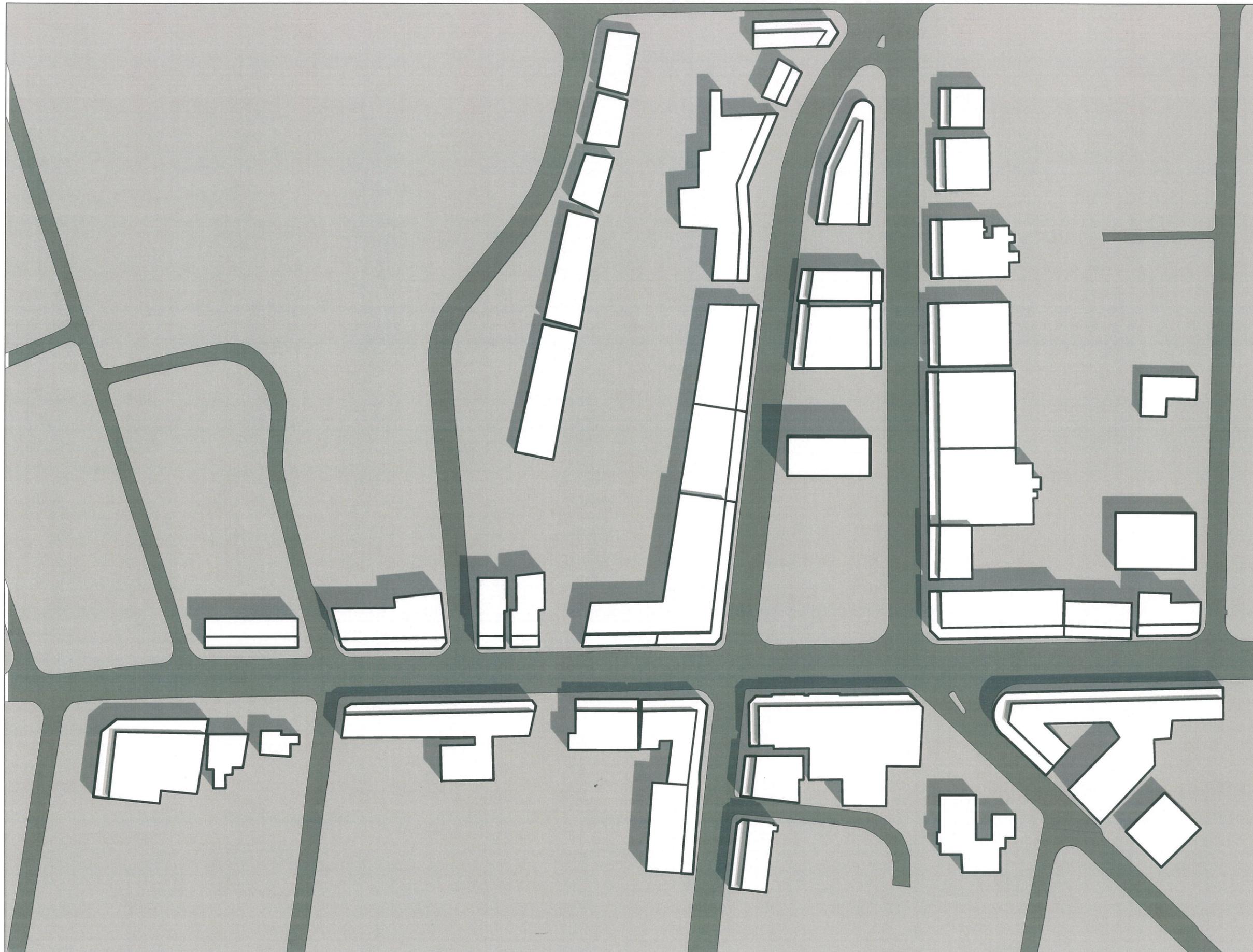
Partial Site Plan
(w/Property Lines)



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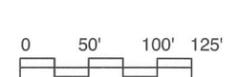


**Buildout/Setback
Option 3**



3.2

Partial Site Plan
(w/Shadows)



13 November 2007



RT-135, Wellesley, MA

Wellesley

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Image MassGIS, Commonwealth of Massachusetts EOE

Streaming 100%

500 ft

Pointer 42°17'46.80" N 71°17'47.58" Welev 138 ft

3/4" = 100'

0' 25' 50' 75' 100' 125'

